

# **SOUTH OF HITLER**





CENTRAL EUROPE  
1939





IN A VIENNESE CABARET

*Left to right:* John Gunther, M. W. Fodor, Mrs. Fodor, Frances Gunther, Dorothy Thompson, Sinclair Lewis.

# SOUTH OF HITLER

*A New and Enlarged Edition of*  
PLOT & COUNTERPLOT  
IN CENTRAL EUROPE

By M. W. FODOR

INTRODUCTION BY  
JOHN GUNTHER



I L L U S T R A T E D

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WITH AFFECTION AND RESPECT  
TO THE LATE  
JOHN G. HAMILTON



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M. W. FODOR



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## INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EDITION

BY

JOHN GUNTHER

LAST year in London I kept a diary. Thumbing through it the other day I came across this passage, dated July 7, 1936:

Fodor is here! He called up just before dinner. M. W. Fodor, the Vienna correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, is one of my oldest and closest friends. I saw him daily for five years. He never wore out a bit. I only hope I didn't. We worked together in Vienna and the Balkans on almost every story, since our newspapers weren't competitive. Fodor is one of the true *good* men of this earth, generous to a fault and incredibly kind. Also he has the most acutely comprehensive knowledge of Central Europe of any journalist I know. Of all Europe, for that matter. Half the good work that has come out of the Danube countries since 1920 or thereabouts has been Fodor's, not only his direct correspondence, but — indirectly — the work of other people whom he educates and influences. I can scarcely recall a visitor to Vienna for ten years who didn't profit from Fodor. He educated Dorothy Thompson and me practically from the cradle. He is better informed, I think, than the official British there, and the Foreign Office pays close attention to his dispatches. He is too modest, almost extinguishes his own light under a bushel of shyness. Relentlessly honest. What a pleasure to be seeing old Fodor again!

There is very little to add to this about Fodor personally. I remember him as an exquisitely considerate host, as an inveterate frequenter of multitudinous coffee-houses, as a companion on many trips in search of news and pleasure, as a counsellor in times of worry and distress, as a whole-hearted lover of Vienna, the art of the Renaissance, British character, Florentine silver, the sausages we used to buy at Gloggnitz, walks in the Wienerwald, the *Manchester Guardian*, *Kaiserschmarren*, and the liberal spirit. We dodged the bullets together in the February civil war in Vienna, we explored



the Austrian countryside from Eisenstadt to Linz and back again, we talked innumerable hours.

Two years ago I wrote *Inside Europe*. In conversation I have found people more inclined to mention two long passages than any others. One was the description of Hitler's forgotten family in the Waldviertel country near the Danube — his lame first-cousin, his *Vormund* (godfather), his aged and poverty-stricken aunt. Needless to say, it was Fodor who brought us to this remote spot and dug out these living remnants of Hitler's obscure past. We were on a holiday trip to Prague, driving in the car I had inherited from Dorothy Thompson. Fodor thought we might stop a little near Weitra and Leonding. I protested. Fodor argued. He didn't tell us what we should find. . . . The other passage was the account of the death of Dollfuss. This I saw largely through Fodor's eyes.

M. W. Fodor was born a Hungarian forty-seven years ago, but after his youth he lived mostly in England, Italy, and Austria. For a time, strange as it may seem, he managed a steel factory in the Midlands, because his family had brought him up to be an engineer. During the Great War he was interned in England, but despite the necessary pressures of that period he profoundly respects, admires, and loves the English. His young son will go to a British school. . . . Fodor's own youth was remarkable. He will not discuss it himself, but I understand from members of his family that at the age of eleven he spoke five languages and had memorized the first fourteen volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. For a considerable period he studied art. Then, after the engineering interlude came politics and journalism. What turned Fodor to journalism was, I believe, the influence of great liberal editors like Scott and Nevinson, whom he had met in England.

*Plot and Counterplot in Central Europe* is an utterly competent political survey of the Danube and Balkan countries. These Fodor knows like the palm of his hand. Discerning, omniscient, fair-minded, he leads us through the complicated and turbulent thoroughfares and by-ways of Central Europe. The book begins with a description of Austria, and considers then the political situations of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey, Albania, Rumania, and Greece. This is not enough for Fodor, however. He proceeds to describe the mass movements, the new ideologies, the conflict in emotional strategies that underlie the surface in these

countries. He discusses the rise of National Socialism, the influence of Italian Fascism, the Legitimist movement, the place of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. He speaks of kings on one side and peasants on the other. He recounts some of his own remarkable adventures. He concludes with a sound prognosis of Central Europe's future.

There is a vast amount of new information in this book. I had never known before the vicious rôle played by Colonel Vyx, the French officer, in Hungary during the Karolyi period. Apparently Hungary's amputated frontiers were written on the map even before the Allied Powers met at Versailles and Trianon. . . . I didn't know that one of the principal spiritual fathers of Hitlerism was an obscure Austrian lawyer named Walter Riehl, who chose the swastika as the party emblem. . . . Fodor points out also the influence of Marx on National Socialism, and that of Sorel and the Syndicalists on Mussolini. He demonstrates that Hitler's hatred of Bolshevism derives partly from the traditional German fear of Pan-Slavism, and he gives a history of the Pan-Slav movement. He describes the influence of the landed gentry on politics in several of the Danubian States, a factor that has been much neglected. He has new material on people as diverse as the Serbian leader Pasitch (who created 'a party not a nation'), Kemal Ataturk, the Austrian Socialist leaders (who desperately sought to stave off the bloodshed of February, 1934), Zog of Albania, and the Bulgarian chieftain Stambolisky.

Fodor tells us a good deal about the origins of the Austrian civil war in 1934, which has so crudely been misnamed a Socialist 'revolution.' For instance, at one time the Socialists were negotiating with Baron Karwinsky, who was supposedly in charge of Public Security, at the very moment when Dollfuss had given the Public Security portfolio to someone else. The Socialists were hopelessly outmanoeuvred and then betrayed.

*Plot and Counterplot in Central Europe* is full of quotable nuggets, but the writer of an introduction should not succumb to the temptation to raid his text. I limit myself to one anecdote. A fabulous creature, Count Sternberg, an old-style Austrian aristocrat, didn't very much like the new Republic, which abolished titles. Doctor Renner was then the Prime Minister. So Count Sternberg had cards printed, 'Adalbert Sternberg, ennobled by Charlemagne, de-titled by Karl Renner.'



Fodor writes impartially and as a liberal. He detests Fascism, but he is mature and fair-minded enough to describe its manifestations objectively. He is not a Socialist, but he gives the Socialist administration in Vienna full and sympathetic credit for its beneficent paternalism. Both the Nazis and the Communists worry him, and, thinking back to the pre-Hitler days when the *Reichswehr* and the Red Army worked closely together, he envisages a possible future understanding between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

Central Europe, so remote from Americans, so complex and unpredictable and puzzling, badly deserves attention, and Fodor's erudite book is an indispensable guide. The Great War started in Central Europe, and so did the world economic crisis. Metternich once said that the Balkans began at Landstrasse-Hauptstrasse in Vienna, but a modern Metternich might add that the world of the West, the British world, the American world, begin there too. The Franco-Soviet pact, of which Czechoslovakia is the hub; the new 'Rome-Berlin axis,' of which Vienna is the centre; the struggle in Spain and German and Italian participation therein — with Vienna a key-point in future calculations — these details, as well as many others, indicate how Central Europe is the pivot on which a great deal depends. The fate of all of us may be decided in some Yugoslav village or Hungarian coffee-shop. Fodor tells us why and how. His *Plot and Counterplot in Central Europe* deserves wide reading and close attention.

JOHN GUNTHER.

**SOUTH OF HITLER**



## CHAPTER I

### AUSTRIA

Nor by chance does the cult of double-faced Janus still linger from Vienna's ancient Roman past. For Vienna is changeable; she can be thus today, but she knows how to be otherwise tomorrow. In fact, she outdoes Janus by having a multitude of faces, and masks in addition. Recently I attended a reception given by the Austrian Government in honour of a visiting foreign potentate. The splendence of the picture was overpowering. In the first place, the framework; the magnificent baroque Imperial Palace of Schoenbrunn, a small copy of Versailles by the great Fischer von Erlach (Vienna's Sir Christopher Wren), but much more comforting and fine than the vast original. The marble walls, hung with huge Belgian mirrors and life-sized portraits of dozens of descendants of the massive Maria Theresa, the golden plates and forks, and the heavy tapestries from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries made a fitting background for the heavily gold-laced sky-blue uniforms of septuagenarian generals, the sumptuous but always becoming dresses of the well-made and well-mannered ladies, the bewitching waltz tunes of Johann Strauss, and the excellent if somewhat rich buffet. No town except London could have heaped in so few square feet so much tradition, pomp, and splendour; and there was, in addition, an aesthetic and artistic atmosphere which no other metropolis can match.

On the way home, my taxi, ramshackle and bad-braked, but driven as fast as its old engine permitted, took me from the hum and buzz of this palace-wreathed beehive past the Reumann Hof, one of those fine tenement buildings which the former Social-Democratic Government of Vienna built as dwellings for the workers of the Austrian capital and as models for the world. The Social-Democratic Government is no longer in power; yet on the corner of the building there is

still the proud inscription: 'Erected from the housing tax of the Municipality of Vienna.'

Here I was in another Vienna, so different from the dazzling glory and somewhat antiquated tradition of Schoenbrunn, but nevertheless so great that it stands unmatched within and without Europe. And this is just as much part and parcel of Vienna as is the Schoenbrunn Palace, or the Vienna Opera which the foreigner, even if hesitatingly musical, must not miss.

For the Vienna Opera is another mystery of this enigmatic town. There is better operatic management and drill in New York and Berlin, there are better individual singers in the United States and in Italy, but there is no second to the entity which is called the Vienna Opera with its unequalled harmonious ensemble of singers, choir, and orchestra.

And then there are the other beauties of Vienna, architectural, monumental, scenic. Take the contemplative comeliness of the Karl's Church. I like to stand with my English friends in front of this other masterpiece of Fischer von Erlach's, and say, 'Look, this church is Vienna in miniature. Many of its details are ugly copies of foreign patterns, but together it is *echt Wien* and it is unique!'

The old parts of the Hofburg, the former Imperial Palace, the austere beauty of the Schwarzenberg Palace, the emerald-coloured dome of the Salesian Church and the heavily decorated yet masterful Belvedere once seen can never be forgotten. But enough of the town itself! You still have to enjoy the fine view from the Cobenzl Hill, where a restaurant now is housed in the palace in which the Empress Maria Theresa's intriguing chancellor once lived and to which he gave his name. Or the Kahlenberg, the beech and oak-covered neighbour of the Cobenzl, which rises over Vienna as Phidias's gigantic Pallas Athena once rose on the Acropolis, watching over her own town. Or the Wienerwald, the tree-covered hills and mountains which, surrounding Vienna on three sides, give her an invigorating and refreshing air except on days when the enervating Southern wind, *der Foehn*, blows. Few cities in Europe have such enviable surroundings.

In Vienna, you find good beer and bad wine, but even the *Heurige*, that queer product of the vineyards of the Wienerwald, has its own particular quality. It tastes bad and it is decidedly sour; it contains but little alcohol, and yet you can get as drunk on it as on any heavy Ger-

man Hock. And in the small inns where it is sold it produces an atmosphere of brotherhood, love, jollity, and harmony. The count sits next to the coachman, the prince clinks glasses with the pauper, and the taxi-chauffeur is the neighbour of the fastidious suburban rich merchant at the same table. The sour liquid produces fraternity and to the music of the Schrammelquartet, the curious combination of violin, bass-violin, melodion, and guitar, the Vienna *Gemuetlichkeit* rises from the tumblers as Aphrodite rose from the foam of the Aegean. . . .

*Gemuetlichkeit!* This strange word expresses the mentality of Vienna perfectly and has no equivalent in any other language on earth. *Gemuetlichkeit* means jolliness and gaiety, it spells carelessness and easygoing levity, but it also includes the ominous Vienna trait: laziness. The secret of the Viennese is that they have discovered how to combine a minimum of work with the maximum of the amenities of life.

*Gemuetlichkeit* is probably the chief trait of the Viennese. Would a casual visitor, who happened to be in the Floridsdorf suburb on February 13, 1934, when the machine guns were sweeping the Bruennerstrasse and the curbstones were strewn with the bodies of dead Socialists have called Vienna *gemuetlich*? And yet it was as true a Vienna as is the *Heurige*, where after the third pint of sour wine the Viennese feels as if he were 'in a heaven full of violins.'

Most of the time Vienna has seemed to me such a heaven, full of music and amenities, but I have met her other face, too. I remember when an angry mob stormed the Palace of Justice and some hooligans set it on fire. But even in this paroxysm of violence she is different from sister-cities. July 15, 1927, was no joke — both the crowd and the police lost their heads. The mob got so out of control that, when the extremely popular Mayor of Vienna, Karl Seitz, standing on the running-board of a fire-engine, implored the crowd to let the engine pass to extinguish the fire at the Palace of Justice, he was insulted. And the police, on normal days conciliatory and polite, had become butchers, shooting down by the dozens unarmed civilians wantonly and without warning. It is enough to say that two days' fighting caused the death of one hundred persons.

The trials of the offenders which followed that day of revolt brought to light examples of typical Viennese mentality. Here is one. The attack of the mob on the Palace of Justice was so sudden

that a number of policemen stationed in the building were trapped in it. One of these policemen approached a ringleader of the revolutionists and implored: 'The mob is angry and if I am caught here, they will lynch me. I have a wife and five children at home. Save me, save my life, please!' The ringleader, being a Viennese, understood this plea. But how to get him out? If the policeman were caught in his uniform, the crowd would beat him up or even hang him. With quick decision the revolutionary took an overcoat which one of the judges had left on a cloak-room peg in his hurried departure from the building, and told the policeman to put it over his uniform. Then the ringleader left his 'ringleading' for a while, conducted the policeman to safety through the dense crowd, commandeered a taxi and sent the trembling man home to his family.

This ringleader was tried twice. He was acquitted by a jury on the major offence of haranguing the crowd and of incendiarism, though the detectives gave evidence under oath that they saw him act as leader of the most destructive group in the building and the newsreel pictures also proved his guilt. But the jurymen were Viennese and they felt sympathy with the defendant. The same fellow was tried once more before a less important law court which, however, was presided over by a professional judge. Before this tribunal the revolutionary was accused of having stolen the overcoat of a judge and of having illegally commandeered a taxi. In his defence the revolutionary pointed out that he used the overcoat and the taxi to save a policeman from the anger of the crowd. He was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. This is Vienna.

And when on an earlier occasion, on December 1, 1921, a hungry mob broke the shop windows and looted the hotels of the Ringstrasse in Vienna, I was watching events with my colleague, Dorothy Thompson, the Vienna correspondent of the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*. She wore a short fur coat, not an expensive one, yet in those days of misery a comparative luxury in this town. Suddenly a proletarian woman from the suburbs, dressed in rags and carrying a huge cobblestone in her right hand, came up to her and said: 'Miss, please, it seems to me that you are a foreigner. This is an angry crowd. Though probably nothing will happen to you, it would be better if you were to go home and take off this fur coat. Put on another, less conspicuous coat, and then come back.' Hardly had she uttered these words when she hurled the huge cobblestone against



the plate-glass window of the Café Sacher, breaking the fine Belgian glass into small bits.

This is Vienna, the Vienna which never tires of telling and hearing about herself such stories as the following:

In the spring of 1934, after twenty years' sojourn in the Steinhof Lunatic Asylum, one of the inmates was released. The doctors had certified that he was completely cured. He had entered the asylum before the Great War, and knew nothing of what had taken place during and after it. His first walk took him to the Imperial Palace in Vienna.

Missing the gorgeous uniforms of the Imperial Guards, he asked one of the passers-by: 'I presume that our dear old Francis Joseph must be away from Vienna?'

'Emperor Francis Joseph? He died in 1916. Austria ceased to be an Empire in 1918,' answered the passer-by.

'There must have been a revolution then. Did Austria become a Republic? Do the Social Democrats rule the country?'

'The Socialists? No. They are all imprisoned, or, if they have been released, they are certainly in no responsible post. And we are no longer a Republic. This is the *Christlich Deutscher Bundesstaat Oesterreich auf staendischer Grundlage*.'

'And who rules this Federal State?'

'The Republic President, Herr Wilhelm Miklas.'

'But you said Austria was no longer a Republic. How can we be ruled, then, by a Republican President?'

The stranger lost patience, shrugged his shoulders, and walked away in disgust.

The poor ex-lunatic was now more curious than ever, and he tried to pump another passer-by for information. Could he tell how things were in Hungary? Our friend learned that Hungary had been separated from Austria. Is Hungary also a Federal State or a Republic? No, Hungary is a kingdom. And who is the king? Nobody. Hungary is a kingdom without a king. Who rules Hungary? Regent Nicholas von Horthy, formerly Grand Admiral of the Austrian Fleet.

'Hungary must then have retained her seaside?' asked our unfortunate friend.

'Oh, no! The Regent Horthy is an admiral without a fleet. But why are you so interested in Hungary?' asked the stranger.

'Because I have a cousin in Agram,' answered the ex-lunatic.

'You mean Zagreb,' said the other fellow. 'Zagreb is in Yugoslavia.'

'Yugoslavia?' Our friend had never heard this word before.

'Oh, don't you know?' explained the stranger. 'The Slovenes in Austria and the Croats in Hungary were dissatisfied with German and Magyar rule, and after the war they seceded from the old Monarchy. They joined the Serbs, and formed the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.'

'Then they now enjoy perfect freedom?'

'Oh, no,' answered the stranger. 'They exist no longer as Slovenes and Croats, but only as Yugoslavs.'

'I give it up,' said the ex-lunatic in despair. 'They assured me in the Steinhof that I was perfectly cured, but now I realize that I am still raving mad. I'll return to Steinhof.'

'You are a lunatic?' asked the other fellow. 'Do not trouble to return to Steinhof. We are all crazy here. You will feel quite at home with us. And you still have the chance of becoming Premier or Dictator of one of the minor countries roundabout us.'

The saddest thing about this story is that it could easily be true. The redrafting of frontiers in Central and Southeastern Europe by the makers of the Versailles, Saint-Germain, and Trianon Treaties has not brought the tranquillity which the world needs.

Seven countries, of which five are entirely new formations (Austria, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia), were carved from the territories of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Austria has become the weakest spot in the chain of the new countries. Once upon a time the parts which now form Austria played a dominating rôle over the fortunes of large territories. And for four centuries Austria filled this dominating rôle with great skill and wisdom. Vienna was the arbiter between Germans and Magyars, Slavs and Italians. When the victory of the Allies precipitated the collapse of the old structure, there remained a torso deprived of its limbs, but left with a head, Vienna, out of proportion to the remaining trunk.

The peacemakers of Versailles tried to talk Austria into the belief that she could lead an independent existence in her present reduced form. To any sane man it should have been obvious even in 1918 that there were only two solutions: either an economic co-operation

of all the Danubian States in the interest of the maintenance of this political independence of Austria, or else the *Anschluss*, union of Austria with Germany. But Clemenceau urged the dismemberment of the Austrian Empire because he wanted to deprive Germany of a potential future ally. France was not prepared to increase the strength of the German nation by permitting the absorption of six and one-half million Germans. And thus the paragraph, forbidding the 'forfeiting of her independence,' was included in the Austrian Peace Treaty.

Austrian independence is desirable for many reasons, especially from the point of view of European balance, but it is possible only if the economic existence of Austria is guaranteed through co-operation between the Danubian States which should have been inaugurated immediately after the break-up of the sound economic structure of the old Empire. So far none of the proper remedies have been applied. . . .

Thanks to the avarice of some Versailles treaty-makers and the stupidity of all, Austria has become the troublesome child of post-war Europe. Two years after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Karl Hans Strobl, one of the wittiest writers of the former Austria, wrote a novel which in those dreary days was regarded as prophetic. Strobl tried to visualize the impending decay of the once proud city of the ancient Habsburg Emperors, now deprived of its hinterland. Strobl exaggerated the actual decline of Vienna; in his novel the decay reached such a stage that all communications were broken off; the streets deserted; through unrepaired pavements grass and weeds were growing; the plaster façades of the buildings were tumbling down rapidly; houses collapsed — the whole town presented a picture of doom. Malaria and other diseases decimated the population, and the citizens of the neighbouring countries, to prevent the spread of disease into their districts, drew a *cordon sanitaire* around Vienna, surrounding the town with a dense barbed-wire fence.

Things did not turn out quite so badly as Strobl foreshadowed them. But for a time they were bad enough. And the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, and Czechoslovakia were compelled repeatedly to go deep into their pockets to contribute to the various loans which were destined to keep Austria afloat.

These financial helps were, in reality, alms. Only an economic co-operation of all could have offered efficient help, but this was impossible in face of the political difficulties in the way of such collaboration. In consequence, Austria had to frighten the world with a new scare every other year: looting of the shops and hunger riots in December, 1921; voting for union with Germany in the Tyrol and Salzburg in the same year; fall of the krone and inflation in 1922; collapse of important banks and economic establishments in 1924; revolt and burning of the Palace of Justice in July, 1927; *Putsch* rumours in 1929 and 1930; the collapse of the Credit Anstalt in 1931 which inaugurated the world economic crisis; the Nazi attack on Austria in 1933; the civil war between Government and Socialists in February, 1934; the Nazi rising and the murder of Doctor Engelbert Dollfuss in July, 1934 — '*Mein Liebchen, was willst Du noch mehr?*' sang Heine.

According to the doctors' verdict Austria should have died years ago. It seemed, indeed, that the starvation and collapse of the post-war years would bring Bolshevism and anarchy. But Austria survived. In 1922 to 1924 the financial collapse was so thorough that the end seemed to be again near. But Austria continued to live. And she reconstructed her economic and financial life with such thoroughness that it commanded the admiration of a large part of the world. In 1929 it seemed that political feuds would destroy her independence. But she still survived. Any other country would have succumbed to the wound inflicted by the collapse of the biggest bank of the country. Austria not only survived the failure of the Credit Anstalt, but in a remarkably short time reconstructed not only the ramshackle bank, but also her own finances. Then came the worst. Austrian-born Adolf Hitler mobilized all his cunning and power, represented by a Germany sixty-seven millions strong, against this small country. Everybody expected in 1933 and 1934 that Austria would become a victim of this aggression. But she still carries on an independent life. Many people refer to this as the *Oesterreichisches Wunder* — the 'Austrian miracle.' It is certainly a miracle, partly caused by a still enormous asset of brains and tradition left over by an empire which played a dominating rôle in Europe for seven hundred years, and partly thanks to the clumsiness of her enemies. But the Austrian miracle has worked. It will, however, be the function of other chapters to explain how and why this Austrian miracle could have become effective.



## CHAPTER II

### HUNGARY

To THE average reader of the popular English or American newspaper, Hungary is an unknown land of castles and cattle, inhabited by a fiery race of noblemen dressed in brocades and velvets, who fight duels before breakfast, and are nourished on goulash and paprika.

Needless to say, this impression is false: the survival of duelling in an otherwise civilized country must be considered as a sign of the atavism of the Asiatic blood that flows in Magyar veins, but not as a dominating trait. And though there is indeed a dashing, romantic, and spirited side to the Hungarians, there is also a serious Hungary which has given great talents to the world. If Magyar were not a language limited by its difficulty to the use of about twelve million people, the world would class Hungarian poetry next to English and French and Spanish. Since novels and plays are more easily translated, several Hungarian playwrights, especially Francis Molnar, have won world-wide fame. Hungary has produced many masters of the violin and many famous composers. In politics she has had figures who were sky-high above the average of neighbouring countries. In the last eight decades she has had a Kossuth; a Francis Deak, who knew how to make peace with Austria in time and with honour; a Count Julius Andrassy, who was the maker of the Triple Alliance; and Koloman Tisza, who reorganized Hungary after the days that followed the reaction; and a Count Stephen Tisza, who dared raise his voice against war in the Privy Council of the late Emperor Francis Joseph.

The secret of the pre-war Magyar statesmen's leadership is to be found in the fact that their genius, fantasy, and verve were held in check by the moderate and somewhat bureaucratic Francis Joseph. Austrian *Gemuetlichkeit* and Magyar *élan* combined to postpone for decades the dissolution of the Austrian Empire.

But even Francis Joseph often found it difficult to check the outbursts of Magyar temperament and nationalism. How much more difficult the situation has become now that this levelling and mediating factor, the Habsburg Monarchy, has disappeared, and the Magyars have been left to stew in their own juice! For on closer analysis, the student of Hungary is bewildered with the mixture of talent and romance, energy and petty rancour, creative ability and ridiculous Orientalism that he finds in this Danubian Canaan.

Though the Magyars are proud of the fact that their parliamentary régime is only seven years younger than that of Great Britain, yet the form of parliamentarism which was practised in Hungary in the pre-war days could be compared only with the British of the pre-Reform days! Hungary before the collapse of the Monarchy was ruled, in reality, by feudal lords (magnates), who supplied the leaders of the various political parties (except the Social Democrats and smaller groups of peasant or democratic factions). The political leaders of pre-war Hungary were all chauvinistic, and the essential difference between them consisted in their attitude toward co-operation with Austria. A large section, which was in power from 1867 until 1917 (with the exception of a brief interval in the year 1905), stood on a platform of the compromise (*Ausgleich*) of 1867, and was willing to serve the Habsburgs and to co-operate with Austria. But even this faction (misleadingly called the Liberal Party because of its religious views) jealously guarded Magyar prerogatives. The other group, which supplied the major part of the Opposition, stood for the principles of Kossuth, who raised the banner of Magyar independence in 1848, and his successors, who fought for a Hungary politically, militarily, and economically independent, and connected with Vienna only by a personal union effected through a common throne.

The extremists, of course, preached against even this tie. From the mouths of various agitators, the peasants of Hungary were accustomed to learn that all their misfortunes were due to the four hundred years' oppression of the Habsburgs. To admit that it was the oppression of the feudal class that caused the misery of the peasants was not in the interest of these leaders, who were of the landed gentry.

It was a kind of belated confession when one of these nobles, who before the war was eager to place the blame on Austria, the Minister

of the Interior of the White régime of 1919, Herr Oedoen von Beniczky, exclaimed two years later: 'The greatest crime, from the Hungarian point of view, was the breaking away from Austria and the dethronement of the Habsburgs! As long as we were ruled by the Habsburgs, this country enjoyed the benefits of civilization. Now that they are no more, the thin Western coating is gone and the Tatar blood has come out.' This utterance of Beniczky was made in the days of the White Terror.

While the propertied classes were conducting an ephemeral war on the question of relations to Austria, there was a marked unrest in pre-war Hungary which could not obtain real parliamentary expression because of the obsolete and feudal composition of Hungary's political representative body. The unrest was twofold: national and social. The national unrest consisted in the slow but steady awakening of the various national minorities; the social dissatisfaction arose from the uneven distribution of the landed wealth. The national question became an issue only in the middle of the past century. Hungary, as founded by the Magyar conquerors in the ninth century, was a land of mixed nationalities in which the Magyars assumed the leadership, but left considerable national independence to the minorities until the forties of the last century. Then the nationalist wave sweeping over Europe awakened the consciousness of the subject Serbian, Croat, Slovak, and Rumanian races. At the same time the Magyars tried to counteract the national ambitions of the subject races by Magyarization. The result of this policy was the loss of the national minority territories through the peace treaties. This solved the national question, but in a spirit adverse to the Hungarian aims.

The social unrest was of a different nature. Kossuth's national campaign could captivate the peasant because his chauvinistic Hungarian crusade was coupled with the liberation of the peasant from serfdom. But the unequal distribution of landed property was the real cancer of Hungary's social system, and on this question none of the major political parties was ready to offer any remedy. In the middle years of the last century, the great Liberal leader, Francis Deak, said, 'Our political organizations have entrusted the ownership of four-fifths of all landed property to seventy thousand noblemen, while seven millions own not a square inch.' At the outbreak of the Great War twenty-three hundred noble families owned one-

third of all the land in Hungary. According to the latest statistics half of the country is divided amongst eight hundred forty thousand small holders; one-fifth amongst ten thousand middle-sized owners; and the remaining three-tenths amongst twelve hundred twenty-eight large estates. Seven hundred thousand peasants and agricultural labourers have no land at all, while there are at least four hundred fifty thousand small holders whose acreage is so small that it is not sufficient for the maintenance of their families.

The peasants, of course, were seething with unrest. But, though they numbered several millions in pre-war Hungary, the electioneering terror allowed them to send to Parliament only three representatives of their class. There were two outstanding peasant leaders in Hungary of the pre-war days; the one was the Slovak, Andrew Achim of Békéscsaba, in Southern Hungary, and the other Stephen Szabó, from Nagyatád in Transdanubia. Achim's agitation followed Socialist lines—it was a healthy, energetic peasant revolutionary policy, which today would be called peasant Bolshevism. Three Zsilinsky brothers, sons of a near-by landowner, shot him down one day, and with his death the budding Agrarian-Socialist movement came to an end one or two years before the war. Szabó was of a more conservative type and his Small-Holders' Party worked for a constitutional land reform within the realm.

Another form of social unrest in Hungary existed amongst the working classes. With Government subsidies new industries were created in pre-war Hungary, and the industrial classes naturally tried to enrich themselves by using cheap labour. Against this oppression of the industrial owners a strong Social-Democratic movement came into existence. Less than half a million industrial workers soon had more representatives in Parliament than the millions of the dispossessed peasants.

These were the conditions in 1918 when a tired and exhausted Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was about to lose the Great War. And there being only one crime greater than starting a war, namely, losing it, the rulers of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were accused of this offence. The front of the Central Powers in Italy was crumbling; the tired soldiers were demanding to be sent home. Seething with desire for revenge for four years' sufferings which had been endured in vain, the returning troops arrived in Vienna and Budapest revolution-bent. It is easy, and at the same time



futile, to philosophize in the armchair about what should have been done and what should have been avoided to prevent the Revolution. Like their German brethren, the Hungarian propertied classes, later, much later, when it was safe to do so, invented the theory that the defeat was due solely to the 'stabbing in the back by Jews, Socialists, Freemasons, and kindred internationalists.' But the truth is that Austria-Hungary, after four years' valiant struggle and after a resistance unexpected from a ramshackle empire, was beaten by the superior numbers, by the larger and more numerous guns, and by the better financial, economic, and military resources of the Allies. Inevitably the Revolution followed in the footsteps of this *débâcle*. One must remember that the Hungarian peasant and worker, and also the officers, had been fighting for years at the front and had been mown down by the opponents' machine guns and artillery, yet at home the children and women of the lower classes, when not actually starving, had been hungering while the industrial captains and the middle classes had been making huge profits on war supplies. Now that the war was lost, the wrath of the population turned on the landowners who had profited by selling food for high prices to the Germans and Austrians, and against the industrialists who had sold bad boots to the soldiers and inferior munitions to the army. 'Hang the profiteers' became the cry amongst the masses.

Under these circumstances it was a great achievement that the leaders of the Hungarian Revolution, headed by Count Michael Karolyi, could turn it into a national rather than a social revolution. Passions were high; there was no reliable army or police left; and yet the makers of the Hungarian Revolution managed to prevent the outburst of passion in the masses from taking the form it had taken in Russia the previous year. The Hungarian October Revolution was a bloodless one.

The leaders of the Revolution were intelligent and highly educated persons, but without much knowledge of or instinct for politics. Most of them were professors or journalists; and Count Karolyi, honest and straightforward as he is, was not a born leader of a revolution. He was an alien in his own country. The son of an exiled aristocrat, he had spent most of his youth abroad, in France and Great Britain, and there had learned to admire the principles of democracy. That he meant what he had said, the noble count proved by handing over his extensive estates to his own peasants

to set an example for a future land reform. But nevertheless, he lacked the energy to resist the brutal opportunists and the daring extremists in his own camp.

Some years later I asked Louis Purjesz, the editor of the leading middle-class Radical organ in Budapest, who himself had a lion's share in organizing the Revolution, why the revolutionaries' choice had fallen on Karolyi.

'In Hungary we required a count to make even a democratic revolution,' answered the editor, 'and Karolyi was the only aristocrat available.'

Karolyi's fault was weakness. But only that. All other accusations of his enemies are impudent calumnies, invented to darken the name of a man who cannot any longer defend himself. The reactionaries accused him of betraying Hungary and of delivering her to the mercy of Bolshevik Russia. But the truth was that Karolyi, in spite of strong democratic and Socialist sympathies, was at heart a Magyar Nationalist like the rest of his class. During his régime, in February, 1919, I had the opportunity to visit his propaganda office in a hidden street of Buda, where a shrewd Jewish leader, called Gaspar, invented the very clever shibboleths for Magyar revisionist propaganda. I saw on the walls posters that shrieked: '*Nem, nem, soha!*' (No, no, never!)—words which were to become the war-cry of Karolyi's Nationalist successors. Likewise, the map of Hungary, with four corners broken off, entitled '*Voulez-vous quatre Alsaces?*' was also there. Thus the slogans of the nationalist, reactionary Hungary of eighteen months later were already in existence under Karolyi. He objected strenuously to the high-handed demands of the Supreme Council; he protested against the proposed dismemberment. His weakness and his nationalism made possible the erection of a Bolshevik régime in Hungary, but only because the criminal ignorance, avarice, and vengefulness of the peacemakers in Versailles had not only provided the site, but also laid the foundations for it!

The French general, Franchet d'Esperey, then stationed in Belgrade as the representative of the victorious Allies, treated the emissaries of Karolyi as though they were hounds. When they tried to bring to the Maréchal the representatives of the soldiers' councils which were then the legal spokesmen of the army, Franchet d'Esperey shouted: '*Etes-vous tombés si bas?*' (Have you sunk so low?)

D'Esperey sent two hundred coloured troops to Budapest to 'represent' the Allies. Their commander was a certain Colonel Vyx. I do not know whether or not this French colonel was a professional soldier; I do know, however, that he was unfit to conduct negotiations with a gentleman as cultivated and highly educated as Count Michael Karolyi. On March 20, 1919, Colonel Vyx visited the noble count and presented a verbal message from the Versailles Supreme Council, in which Karolyi as President of the Hungarian People's Republic was informed about the 'front lines' of occupation which were to be established by the Allied troops. These lines, accidentally or otherwise, correspond roughly with the present frontiers of Hungary. The Supreme Council had intended to inform Hungary merely as to the delineation of the military occupation of the country, while the future frontiers were to be subject to a peace treaty which should, without any authorization whatever, be negotiated with Karolyi.

The Count asked the Colonel: 'Are these lines of demarcation those of a temporary occupation or are they the future frontiers of Hungary?' Colonel Vyx replied that they were the future frontiers of the country. This terrible revelation, that two-thirds of Hungary was to be handed over to the subject nationalities, struck the patriot Karolyi so deeply that he decided to resign. If he had only been given a few days' notice or warning! But this was a twenty-four hours' ultimatum! There was great suspense. No Hungarian was willing to take over the post of Premier or of President under such circumstances. Where, then, were those who now cast stones at Karolyi? The Archduke Frederick was in Switzerland; Count Apponyi, Count Julius Andrássy, Count Stephen Bethlen were abroad. Then was the time for a courageous man to have taken over power and to have defied the Allies, as did Mustapha Kemal two years later in Turkey. But Karolyi was not a Mustapha Kemal. And there were no other Mustapha Kemals available, either.

Three hours after the ill-famed Vyx memorandum I was in Karolyi's press office. His press chief, an old friend, told me that he hoped that Karolyi would remain firm. But, unfortunately, Karolyi's highstrung and sensitive nerves gave way. Events were stronger than his will-power. On March 21, 1919, Sigismund Kunfi, Minister of Education in the Karolyi Government, an honest but somewhat temperamental Radical Socialist, visited Béla Kun in his

prison, and suggested to the Communist leader that, as no middle-class leader was willing to form a government, there remained nothing else but that the Communists and the Social Democrats should unite in a common front to save the People's Republic. Béla Kun was released from prison a few moments after six thousand workers of the Csepel munition works began a march on Budapest. Under the weight of this turn of events, Karolyi finally resigned and handed over the power to a Communist-Socialist coalition.

The two hundred black troops of Colonel Vyx threw away their rifles and shouted, 'Long live the Proletarian Revolution!'

An American, Professor Philip Marshall Brown, intervened, March 25, with Béla Kun and saved Vyx's life when Red guards were on the point of lynching him. Then he was allowed to leave Budapest. Yet he deserves to be known as the man who was responsible for the Bolshevik Revolution in Hungary.

About the Bolshevik period in Hungary, I shall write in another chapter, and about the White Terror in yet another. After these two political paroxysms in the spring of 1921, things began to take a somewhat normal course in Hungary. Count Paul Teleky, still a great friend of the rowdy 'Awakening Magyars,' was the Premier, when suddenly news came that King Karl IV ('King' was the title in Hungary of Karl I and other Emperors of Austria) had arrived in Szombathely.

This attempt at a restoration of the Habsburgs probably would have been successful if Karl had not arrived too soon. I was in Hungary in those days, and, from the accounts of friends who were in position to see behind the scenes, I was able to reconstruct the sequence of events. It appears that Prince Louis Windischgraetz and some of the more impatient Legitimists had induced Karl to attempt a come-back by reminding him of his coronation oath. Prince Windischgraetz gave a false passport to the Emperor, who in a sleeping compartment of the Paris-Vienna express, travelled to Vienna, there slept in the house of Count Thomas Erdoedy in the Landskrongasse, and next day motored to the Austro-Hungarian frontier. The Austrian car, however, was not permitted to cross into Hungary. The Emperor arrived with some delay at the palace of Count John Mikes, Bishop of Szombathely, on the evening of March 27.



Szombathely, an important town on the western frontier of Hungary, seemed to be a suitable place for the setting of such a *coup*. The Bishop of the town was a prominent Legitimist, all the land-owners in the district were supporters of Karl, and the commander of the garrison was Colonel Lehar, the brother of the composer of the *Merry Widow*, an officer well known for his Legitimist leanings. Next day, on Sunday, the wedding of Baron Paul Pronay, the leading terrorist of the White Régime, was scheduled to take place in the cathedral of the town. The bride-to-be was Countess Aimée Palffy-Daun, a former lady-in-waiting of the Empress Zita. After the *Putsch* of Karl, gossip rumoured that she had been sent by the Empress to Hungary to captivate this most dangerous enemy of the restoration in Hungary and that she succeeded only too well. In succeeding, however, she herself also fell in love. It was said, too, that the plan to have the wedding in Szombathely was made with the intention that Pronay and his two best men, Goemboes and Hejjas, should be captured by the troops of Lehar, so that Karl could reoccupy his throne without resistance. The plan was cleverly schemed, but impetuous Karl arrived too soon, and this gave away the aims of the organizers of the *Putsch*. Pronay and his best men remained in Budapest (the wedding took place some weeks later in Budapest), and when Karl, against the advice of Colonel Lehar, went alone to Budapest, he was defeated by Goemboes and Pronay. The final conversation between Horthy and Karl (which lasted two and a half hours) cannot yet be written, but it is certain that Horthy could not summon the energy to refuse Karl, and that only the energetic intervention of Captain Goemboes and of Baron Pronay compelled the King to return to Szombathely and, a few days later, to go back into exile in Switzerland.

Once more in the same year another restoration attempt by Karl surprised the world. This time, accompanied by his wife, Zita, the ex-Emperor arrived by airplane in the Burgenland part of Hungary which in those days was the scene of fierce fighting between Hungarian insurgents and Austrian gendarmes, the latter seeking to take possession of the country on the basis of the rights given to Austria by the Saint-Germain and Trianon Treaties. With the armed forces of Colonel Lehar and of Major Osztenburg, the Emperor advanced on Budapest. But Goemboes, the bitter opponent of a Habsburg restoration in Hungary, hurriedly collected troops in the country-

side and armed the Budapest students; and with these impromptu warriors he opposed the forces of the King. The King's forces were far superior to those of Goemboes, but when Karl saw that his restoration attempt would lead to a civil war, he ordered a cessation of fighting. His magnanimous gesture caused him to lose the throne and later his life, because the climate of his exile proved fatal to his weak lungs.

I was covering the story in those days with Dorothy Thompson. She decided to penetrate into the castle of Tata where the King was held prisoner, while I waited at the other end of a telephone wire so that the message could be put quickly out of reach of the censor. The interview which Dorothy Thompson had with the King was brief: in fact, the prisoner-King reversed their rôles by pumping the American journalist for information concerning what was happening outside. But at the end he said: 'Had I known that a single drop of Hungarian blood would be shed, I should not have come. I was falsely informed.' It was clear that his advisers thought that, once near the goal, the King would not shrink even from bloodshed. But Karl was a true gentleman with lofty ideals and a strong humanitarian conviction; and he was probably a religious man who believed that Providence would reward him for this humanitarianism.

In those days Count Bethlen was the Premier. In a speech outlining his programme, six months earlier, he had avowed himself an ardent Monarchist. But when Karl arrived in Hungary, Bethlen had to take into consideration the temper of his own supporters, as well as the pressure of an anti-Habsburg Entente which was enormously strong. The Little Entente countries were already mobilizing. The Legitimists maintain that this mobilization was a bluff. But I saw the Czech troops at Komarno and I am convinced that it was by no means a bluff.

The second restoration attempt of Karl brought Bethlen into an awkward position. He came into power by the urging of the aristocrats, who naturally were anti-Bolshevik and anti-Socialist, but who abhorred the idea of wholesale murder of innocent Bolos and Jews. Filthy prisons — that is different; but murder, that is not becoming for feudal noblemen. Bethlen intended, on coming to power, to conduct a war on the rowdy elements of the minor nobility and middle classes who were the representatives of the White Terror, and whose spiritual leaders were Julius Goemboes and Tibor Eck-

hardt. But this senseless and unprepared *coup* of Karl's caused him grave embarrassment. Necessity makes strange bedfellows, and thus he had to seek co-operation with the gang of Goemboes. But Bethlen was an energetic man and, even if he had to delay his aims, he did not give them up. As soon as he succeeded in creating a halfway reliable police force, one morning he surrounded the three hotels which were the headquarters of the White Terrorists and forced them to surrender. For three years these murderous gangs had kept Budapest and the provinces in fear and agony. Count Bethlen finished with them in half an hour. Not a single shot was fired, and the murderers of many hundred Jews and Socialists surrendered their weapons without resistance.

For ten years Count Bethlen was the virtual dictator of Hungary, though from the beginning he endeavoured to give a parliamentary façade to the whole edifice. During the only elections held on the basis of a general franchise (which were conducted during the White Terror in 1919), the small holders succeeded in placing 115 deputies in the Hungarian Parliament, thus constituting the strongest faction in the House of Commons. But if Count Bethlen despised and disliked bloodshed as a method of rule and tried to return at least to halfway civilized forms of government, his election successes naturally were attained with terror such as that with which Magyar elections were always carried on in pre-war days. And his terror was directed against the small holders. Count Bethlen, the Transylvanian aristocrat, had lost his own estates to the Rumanians; but, landless as he was, he stuck to the tradition of his class, in disliking the idea that the peasant should have a word in politics or should possess his own strip of land. The small holders were overwhelmed at the election. To keep at least the forms, Bethlen retained the peasant leader, Stephen Szabó, as Minister of Agriculture. But the continuous intrigues directed against this able peasant leader brought him to an untimely death, which played a final trump card into the hands of Bethlen.

After this episode Bethlen could continue his rule of enlightened absolutism, tempered by an appearance of parliamentarianism, until 1931. In the meantime he achieved foreign political success by concluding an Italo-Hungarian treaty of friendship which broke Hungary's isolation. Toward the end of his régime, the complaints

against the corruption of some of his assistants became so loud that the Bethlen Cabinet fell into disrepute. When in the summer of 1931 the Hungarian banks were compelled to close for weeks because of the crisis precipitated by the troubles of the Credit Anstalt in Vienna, Bethlen threw up his job, declaring that 'such petty financial wranglings were not fit for an aristocrat.' The brilliant gambler and intriguer enjoyed the risks and chances of domestic and foreign politics, but he loathed wasting his time with finance, which is still considered a matter unfit for gentlemen in Hungary.

Though his immediate successor became the grey and uninspiring Count Julius Karolyi (a cousin of the former revolutionary leader), it was obvious that Bethlen's resignation opened to Captain Goemboes the road to power. Goemboes, the representative of the Fascist and Nazi ideas in Hungary, had longed and intrigued for power for many years, but Count Bethlen knew how to block him, even if occasionally he was compelled to use Goemboes's services either as leader of the terroristic elections, or as Under-Secretary, and later Minister, of War. A busy minister in his Cabinet appeared to Bethlen a lesser danger than an ambitious idler.

Goemboes's rule lasted just two days longer than three years. He tried to introduce a more Fascist and totalitarian policy in the Government, while in foreign politics he was preparing a closer co-operation with revisionist and Nazi Germany. But before he could achieve his aims, he died on October 6, 1936.

His successor, Koloman Darányi, always has been in favour of a policy of, for, and by the landed gentry. Darányi's first important post was chief of the personnel office of Bethlen. But though he served Goemboes as Minister of Agriculture, it is common knowledge that Darányi is Bethlen's man. With him a more liberal course and certainly more democratic method of government has come to power, but, just as in the case of Bethlen, the other important question, that of a real land reform, seems now to be dead and buried. In a Europe seething with social unrest and caught between the Scylla and Charybdis of Fascism and Communism, a benevolent semi-parliamentary and moderately democratic régime may be welcome, but the fact remains that one of the sorest problems of Hungary, the question of landownership, has been postponed indefinitely, and that, until this problem is solved, the peace which obtains in Hungary must be considered not a real peace, but only an armistice.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SLAV SPECTRE

THE fears of one's childhood often remain one's inseparable life companions. Hitler's fierce hatred of Bolshevism is not primarily an irreconcilable animosity against the doctrine of the World Revolution as preached from the Kremlin. Naturally, his Russian policy is influenced by the revenge ideas of his White Russian friends, such as Alfred Rosenberg and Scheurer-Kastner. But the pleadings of a Rosenberg find a ready ear in Hitler only because in the Fuehrer there live the memories of an Austrian youth in which the bogey of the Pan-Slav menace played so great a rôle. Tsarist Russia was the arch foreign foe of Austria; the pressure of her lust for expansion was felt in the bones of the crumbling Monarchy.

Moreover, this Slav thrust caused an internal division within the realm of the Austrian Empire. The youthful Hitler during his school years in Leonding, near Linz, often heard of fights between Germans and Czechs in Bohemia, or between Germans and Slovenes in the Krain Province and in Styria; these Slavs, so he heard on all sides, wished to assail German supremacy in Austrian lands. It is a well-known fact that the most nationalistic Germans in Austrian territories came from parts of the Empire where the 'German natural superiority' was challenged by 'Slav impertinence.' Hitler's family originated in Spital, a small village only a few miles distant from the line which divides those whose mother tongue is German from those who confess to being Slavs.

Hitler's anti-Russian attitude is a typical Austrian heritage. Germans, who cling to the Bismarckian traditions, such as the conservative classes or the *Reichswehr*, do not share the Fuehrer's irreconcilable anti-Russian theories. The Second German Empire was not afraid of Russia; on the contrary, it sought an alliance with the Muscovite Empire, an endeavour which was frustrated simply by

existing Austrian alliances that were incompatible with friendship with Saint Petersburg. And the *Reichswehr* of today remembers the principles of the great leaders, Bismarck and Moltke; and instead of rancour against Russia advocates reconciliation on the ground that with the exception of some colonial goods Russia possesses all the raw materials which Germany requires in days of war.

General von Seeckt, probably the chief representative of this school, pleaded for co-operation with Soviet Russia; and a few weeks before the General's death Hitler took pains to try to convince him personally of the 'impossibility' of Seeckt's pleas and of the righteousness of Hitler's demand for a crusade against Bolshevik Russia. For three solid hours Herr Hitler lectured the aged general. Nervously but patiently Seeckt listened to Hitler's 'sermon.' His lean and almost ascetic figure shrank in the large armchair, and when the Fuehrer had finished his philippics against the Soviets, the General got up, put his monocle in his eye, and said curtly: 'I am too old to understand all that you have said to me, Herr Hitler. Goodbye!'

If Bismarck's Germany found no reason to be worried by Russian Pan-Slav ideas (the only Slav minority in Germany which counted, the Poles, were never partisans of the Pan-Slav agitation), Austria had weighty motives to be disturbed. Russia was her rival in the Balkans, and assailed her own authority within her territories by playing the part of a mother to the Slav nationalities in the Austrian realm. Italy also was watching with unrest Pan-Slav ambitions. Pre-war Italy, like post-war Mussolinia, had to meet two major foes: Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism. Great Britain and France have no expansionist lusts and they certainly do not covet any Italian territory. A conflict with them is possible only if a collision is desired by Italy. But Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism, as their names reveal, are expansionist by nature, and either they menace Italian territory directly or threaten to clash with Italian ambitions elsewhere. While Pan-Germanism by its own sheer weight is a constant pressure on Italy's northern frontier, Pan-Slavism is a foe of her Balkan ambitions (where Slav cleverness has already inflicted a defeat on Italian aspirations) and is an obstacle to Italian aims in the eastern Mediterranean.

Pan-Slavism always has been a double-edged sword; and the Tsars of Russia employed it only with hesitation. Just as Russia was willing to accept and even demand spiritual control over the Slavs



through the Greek-Orthodox Church (Pravoslavism), she was also worried that Slav liberation aspirations in Bulgaria and Serbia were directed against established authority. The Serbian insurgent movement of Georg Cerny, better known as Karageorge, challenged with the sword the authority of the Sultan of Turkey; and, although Russia considered the Porte her enemy, to assist this 'in-subordination' of subjects of the Sultan appeared unwise to the Government of Saint Petersburg. The incitations to revolt never came from Russia in the early days; they originated among Slavs subjected to Turkish rule. Thus the Serbs in their fight for liberty turned to Russia only after futile attempts to gain Austrian help. It was in September, 1804, that Matthew Nenadovitch, accompanied by two Serbian friends, undertook a journey to Russia to ask the help of the Tsar for the liberation of the oppressed Serbs. They were received, not by the Tsar, but only by the Foreign Minister, Prince Czartorisky. And he, being of Polish origin, gave them little encouragement. In fact, he declared that, despite the sympathies felt for the Serbs, Russia and the Sultan's Turkey lived in peace and, therefore, the Tsar's Empire could not intervene in Serbia's struggle for liberation. But the Serbian emissaries, instead of telling the truth at home, created the impression that the Tsar's mighty empire was behind the cause of the Slav brotherhood, and this gave so much confidence to the Serbian insurgents, and so discouraged the Turkish pashas in the Belgrade fortress, that the struggles of 1806 and 1807 brought the first decisive successes in the liberation campaign of the Serbians. But real Russian intervention in Serbian affairs came only some decades later when, in 1838, Prince Milos Obrenovitch, under Russian pressure, was forced to accept a council to control his activities. Thereafter Russian influence continued paramount in Serbia, with the exception of short periods when from time to time some of the Obrenovitch princes were somewhat inclined to listen to the counsels of Austria.

Russian influence was equally strong in Bulgaria. The Russian war with Turkey in 1828-29, which was ended by the Peace of Adrianople, lit the spark of national consciousness in the heavily oppressed Bulgarian subjects of Turkey. Schools were founded, a new literature arose. The Bulgars especially declined to submit to the influence on their religious life of the Phanariot clergy, and with the aid of Russia the Bulgarian exarchate was created to make the

Bulgarian Church independent of Greek-Orthodox influence. The Bosnian revolts of 1875 inspired similar national unrest in Bulgaria; and in 1876 the Bulgarian population south of the Balkan Mountains revolted, only to be suppressed with blood and iron. The cruelties of the Turks, however, created such indignation that the conference of the Great Powers in Constantinople proposed the establishment of two autonomous Bulgarian provinces under Christian governors. When this demand of the Powers was rejected by the Porte, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 followed; and, as a result of the Peace of San Stefano, the Russian influence created the tributary Principality of Bulgaria. Great Britain and Austria protested against the large size of the proposed new State (which was to be, more or less, vassal to Russia), and the Berlin Conference of 1878 then reduced Bulgaria to the size which it remained until the Balkan Wars of 1912-13.

Russian influence in the nineteenth century remained strong in all lands where Slavs were living; that is, amongst the Ruthenians, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, and the Bosnians. The Poles were the only Slav race which continued to refuse to participate in this movement which dreamed of creating a union of all Slavs, possibly under Russian guidance. The Czech Dobrovsky said as early as 1795: 'God will show great things to the world through the medium of the Slavs. The Kingdom of Bohemia will become increasingly important; Poland, punished because of the neglect of her mother tongue, will be reborn; the Russian Empire will extend her boundaries as far as the Indian and Persian frontiers — the Slavs will reconquer their ancient territories': a prophecy which has come true in many respects!

The manifestations of Pan-Slav solidarity were manifold. The Austrian police reports of the days of the famous Vienna Congress show how fears were entertained by the Austrian authorities when Tsar Alexander I came to the Congress in Vienna. It was believed that his presence might excite co-religionists in Hungary and cause demonstrations.

There was a strong Pan-Slav feeling in Croatia at one time, and Louis Gaj, the Croatian philologist, advocated ideas which then appeared Utopian. He tried to form a party which demanded the unifying of all peoples of Slav origin — namely, Slovenes, Croats, Serbians, and Bulgars — in a vast Illyria. His dream has, of course,

been realized in part; the first mentioned three nations are now united in Yugoslavia (Land of the South Slavs), while the fourth, the Bulgars, are bound to this group by a treaty of friendship.

The Pan-Slav movement! Before the Great War these words were able to cause consternation in many of the important European chancelleries. The Pan-Slav movement, whether it manifested itself as a push of Russia to Constantinople and the Bosphorus, which displeased the statesmen of Great Britain, or in the form of support for Serbia in her efforts to obtain an outlet on the Adriatic to the annoyance of the chancelleries of Vienna and Rome, always spelled trouble, and often caused war. Pan-Slav ambitions brought the Adriatic Powers almost to the verge of war in 1908, at the time of the annexation of Bosnia by Austria; Pan-Slav aims caused the First Balkan War in 1912, and Slav dissensions caused the Second Balkan War in 1913. And the occasion of the Great War was the Austro-Serbian quarrel of 1914, the basic cause of which was a Serb demand for an outlet to the Adriatic Sea, which was supported by Russia and opposed by Austria. The murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo was the result of a Slav conspiracy against a man whose Austrian pro-Slav schemes threatened to frustrate the Pan-Slav dreams of the pro-Russian Serbs.

Since the Great War the Pan-Slav menace has lost its poison. The Russia of the Tsars, 'Mother Russia of the Slavs,' is no more, and the 'Third International,' in its endeavour to revolutionize the world, has had to forego giving much support to the Slav aims of various kinsmen. And yet even today we find evidence that the Pan-Slav idea is still alive. As old Austria-Hungary was ruled by a German-Magyar hegemony, in the new Central Europe two strong Slav countries, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, have played the first fiddle amongst the concert of the smaller nations for two decades. The attitudes of these Slav States toward Russia, however, have changed substantially since 1917.

Soviet Russia has attempted little or no intervention in these countries on national lines. There was only one period in the history of the Soviets when they coupled, quite successfully, the nationalist principle with their Communist agitation. This was the period of the *Fédération Balkanique* movement in 1924, when the Soviets, by clever propaganda, exploited the dissatisfaction of national and

political factions in Southeastern Europe to their own advantage. It was a time of rancour and unrest in those parts. Yugoslavia was seething with revolt. The Croatians were doggedly opposing the Serbian endeavours to impose on them a centralized rule, such as was embodied in the so-called Vidovdan Constitution. The Macedonians were fighting against Serbian and Greek oppression; in Bulgaria the counter-revolution had murdered the foremost figure of the peasant dictatorship, and sent most of the other peasant leaders into prison or into exile. This unrest seemed to be a good pretext to use the Pan-Slav feelings of these nations to unite them in a combination under the influence of Soviet Russia. Without trying to impose Communist principles on their supporters, the *Fédération Balkanique* movement was to create a useful vanguard to the Soviets for their further activities in other neighbouring countries. The work of the Third International was so successful that the Croatian peasant leader, the late Stephen Raditch, visited Moscow; the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, up to then supported mostly by Italy, signed a treaty with the Soviet representative in Vienna. But just this signature was probably the beginning of the end of the Balkan Federation movement, whose motto was: 'The Balkans for the Balkan people!'

When Todor Alexandroff, the signatory of the Macedonian-Soviet-Russian treaty, returned home from Vienna to Sofia, his associate in the three-membered executive of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization, General Protogeroff, protested energetically against such an alliance. Protogeroff acted under the influence of the Bulgarian army, which was still very pro-Tsarist and maintained the best relations with the Wrangel exiles. Alexandroff yielded to Protogeroff's entreaties, and on some quaint grounds abrogated his own signature on the document. The other signatory on behalf of the executive, the Woiwod Peter Chauleff, stood by his signature. Once signed, the obligation stands, he argued. This led to a murderous feud which first resulted in the assassination of Todor Alexandroff in Gorna Djumaja on August 31, 1924; this was followed by the revenge murder of Peter Chauleff, who was shot on the terrace of a café in Milan, and later, in 1928, Protogeroff was murdered, again as an act of revenge, in the streets of Sofia. The murderous brother feud of the Macedonians had ended the significance of the whole *Fédération Balkanique* movement; a scheme, which, in

any case, had not been approved by the more orthodox leaders in the Third International.

After this Balkan-Federation interlude, the interest of Soviet Russia in the Slav countries, as such, seemed to have ended. But the fraternity of the Slavs remained, even without the patronage of Russia. Already in the days of the post-war period the Peasant Parties of the Slav countries — all predominantly agricultural states — tried to unite in a Green International. The first attempt at such a Slav Green International was made in 1921, but this ambitious scheme was frustrated by the murder in 1923 of Alexander Stambolisky, the Bulgarian peasant leader. Later the conflict between the Serbs and Croats and a clash with the Poles caused difficulties in the way of resurrecting the old idea. But under the influence of the present Czechoslovak Premier, Doctor Milan Hodza, who was a member of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party, the co-operation amongst the Slav Peasant Parties continued to develop; and he went so far as to support financially the Bulgarian Agrarian Party when this body was fighting financial difficulties.

There were other attempts on political lines to unite the Southern Slavs after the war. Under the dictatorship of Stambolisky, great efforts were made to eliminate all questions which were dividing Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. The most important of the obstacles in the way of final reconciliation was the Macedonian revolutionary activities. The I.M.R.O. was not only conducting a wild propaganda campaign against Yugoslavia, but its bands were arranging incursions into Yugoslav Macedonia, blowing up bridges, murdering prefects and killing gendarmes. Stambolisky realized that the Macedonian problem must not be a stumbling-block in the way of co-operation between the two strongest South-Slav nations, and promised Yugoslavia that he would put an end to the revolutionary activities of the Macedonian bands. Two and a half months later, he was murdered by his Macedonian opponents, and the dream of a Southern Pan-Slav co-operation was postponed indefinitely.

But even after Stambolisky's death there were many people in Bulgaria as well as in Yugoslavia who continued to work for close co-operation of the two countries. Voja Marinkovitch, leader of the Serbian Democrats and later Foreign Minister and Premier of Yugoslavia, was one of the staunchest champions of this Yugoslav-Bulgarian union; he, however, wished a Greater Serbia to play a dom-

meering part in Bulgaria. Nevertheless, he had a sense of humour, and when, once in Croatia, a Zagreb supporter of his was arguing that the inclusion of Bulgaria into a Greater Yugoslavia was essential, Marinkovitch said with fine irony: 'You here in the *Pretchani* (former Austro-Hungarian) parts always complain about how many Balkans you got with us, the Serbians. Are we not enough Balkans for you? Do you need even more Balkans?'

Between the Slav countries there are, of course, also other bonds. Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are connected by firm friendship through the pact of the Little Entente, while Bulgaria in 1937 concluded a pact of eternal friendship with Yugoslavia. Since the summer of 1935, Soviet Russia and Czechoslovakia have been connected by a friendship treaty and by a pact of mutual assistance.



## CHAPTER IV

### CZECHOSLOVAKIA

CZECHOSLOVAKIA, the northwestern group of the big Slav family, is known among the civilized nations of the world for the three great names which she has produced: Thomas Garrigue Masaryk,<sup>1</sup> Eduard Benes, and Karol Capek: two presidents and a playwright.

Masaryk, past President of the Republic, was the maker of the Czechoslovak nation. In him, as in the great Italian patriot Mazzini, intense nationalism is combined with a rare liberal spirit. His ideal is a Europe in which balances of power are abolished and free national democracies pursue pacific and unhindered development. Though his country (in common, alas, with other democracies) has been forced to make concessions to the predominant temper in Europe, Masaryk's ideal has not wavered, nor has his faith in the ultimate success of his ideal been shaken. In a Europe whose moral values have been sadly blurred, Masaryk is distinguished for his ability to view a situation uncoloured by his own ambitions.

But Masaryk has not only lofty ideals: he has a sense of realities. He knew that if death had removed him suddenly from the presidential chair, this might have caused serious conflicts in Czechoslovakia. Thus the man who had the courage and ability to build up a new nation had the moral strength to resign the highest post in the Republic when he was at the climax of his power, in order to pave the way for the election of his pupil, friend, and collaborator to the highest post in the Czechoslovak Republic, as a guaranty to him that his work will be continued in the spirit in which he initiated it.

Doctor Eduard Benes, once Premier, for sixteen years Foreign Minister, and since December, 1935, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, has held all his posts through virtue of sheer ability. His

<sup>1</sup>Professor Masaryk died on September 14, 1937.

party, the National Socialist Party of Czechoslovakia (not to be confused with the German National Socialists or 'Nazis'), was for many years the least influential member of the various coalitions that ruled the country. He never was kept in power by the support of this almost insignificant party, nor did he retain his ministerial posts because of his popularity. There is nothing about him to awaken the imagination of men. He is a little, thin man, rather mousy-looking, who even in the later years of his career has often revealed nervousness and shyness. But he has a fine physique, and as a young student he was a famous football 'ace.' In the early years of his career he was called the 'travelling salesman of Czechoslovakia,' because he was constantly on the move between Prague and Paris, Belgrade and Geneva. His energetic representation of Czechoslovakia's interests in the opening years of the post-war period made the Great Powers pay attention to him, and Benes's name became synonymous with the Czechoslovak alliance with France.

His enemies — and their number is considerable — say that he has no original ideas. Whether this is so or not, he has one of the characteristics which have distinguished the greatest European statesmen: he lives absolutely in the present. He decides for the day. And his decisions, in contrast to his nervous and restless manner, are steady and firm. It is less interesting to discuss problems of politics with him than with Masaryk. But he is the more realistic of the two. And yet he is an incurable optimist, and up to now his almost rosy-spectacled optimism has always been justified. He is not epigrammatic, witty or brilliant in conversation, but he is lucid and candid — in which respect also he differs from his European colleagues.

The great achievement of welding peoples of different cultures and traditions into one nation must certainly be accounted to the credit of Masaryk and Benes. It was an enormous task: they took over their heritage when a mighty seven hundred years' old dynasty collapsed, and when a monarchy of fifty-five million inhabitants disintegrated. They had to build on ruins, without any tangible resources, without any efficient helpers, without an already existing bureaucratic machinery. Yugoslavia and Rumania at least had the nucleus of a bureaucratic machinery in the old Rumanian Kingdom or in Serbia, but in Czechoslovakia all this had to be created. And yet the great task was fully accomplished. Furthermore, in extremely difficult days, these two great statesmen were able to maintain in the

heart of Europe a democratic, parliamentary and republican system of government. Their country was assailed by the waves of Fascism and dictatorship from three sides; there was a time when Communism delivered a stiff attack — but Czechoslovakia managed to cling to the democratic forms.

On the other hand, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The world may bestow praise on the leaders of Czechoslovakia for having been able to save democracy in this corner of Europe, but not all those who have eaten the pudding are satisfied. Czechoslovakia, which for one and a half decades was able to show a successful policy both at home and abroad, has come lately into unfortunate straits. The problem of the Germans in her northwestern parts has not only become a sore at home, but has poisoned relations with Nazi Germany, a difficult neighbour even without such a basis for conflict. The Slovaks are by no means satisfied, and the Carpatho-Russian problem is not yet solved. The Magyars enjoy the tacit support of an irredentist movement in neighbouring Hungary, while the infinitesimal Polish minority has become a stumbling-block between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Czechoslovakia is by no means in an enviable position: Germany, Hungary, and until recently Poland were just waiting for the tolling of the death-bell to carve the parts they coveted out of the body of the Republic; her other remaining neighbour, Austria, is more friendly to her at present, but large groups of public opinion, as well as the Austrian army, are not favourably disposed toward the Republic. Only the German would say: '*Viel Feind, viel Ehr*' (Many foes, much honour), but the enlightened leaders of Czechoslovakia do not consider this almost general hostility an honour.

That Czechoslovakia's foreign relations, especially with her neighbours, have turned from bad to worse is probably no fault of hers. The idealistic Czech leaders believed from the beginning in collective security and the League of Nations. When the Italian escapade in Abyssinia resulted in the weakening of the League, this was a great blow to Czechoslovakia. To fill the gap created by the League's temporary sickness, and by the impossibility of persuading Germany to join in an Eastern Locarno, the Czechoslovak-Russian pact of mutual assistance was brought into life in 1935.

This pact aroused a new fury in Germany and Hungary, which accused Czechoslovakia of bringing communism into the heart of

Europe. But this accusation is nonsense, for every sane observer knows that Benes, who can be regarded as the spiritual father of the pact, is, while of Socialist sympathies, an enemy of communism. He has had to fight hard against Communist efforts in his country, and his policy of social reform did much to prevent communism from obtaining a strong foothold in Czechoslovakia. He himself told me one day the story of his interview with the Communists in 1921 when he was Premier.

The Communists were ready to bring off a *coup*. The police got cognizance of these plans and duly informed Benes. He called the leaders to his office and said: 'Gentlemen, you want to revolt. Your duty as good Communists is to proceed with this revolt. My duty is to suppress it. Do your duty, and I will do mine. Good-bye.' The revolt did not take place.

Equally childish are the continual German reports of secret underground flying fields in Czechoslovakia for Russian fliers. In case of war, obviously any aerodrome can be used by the Russian air force if it hurries to the aid of Czechoslovakia. But the Republic is feeling strong enough to defend herself, and the military preparations were made for her own use alone.

If, however, the foreign political situation has become worse through no direct fault of Czechoslovakia, the responsibility of the leaders of the Republic for the unfortunate developments in home relations is, alas, only too evident. The mistakes committed are fundamental, and these follies were committed right at the beginning. The principles on which Masaryk had planned to build the new State were sound. His humanistic ideas, influenced by the philosophies of Huss and Melancthon, were moving in the right direction. Himself of half-Slovak origin, he knew the difference between the highly cultured Czech and the retrogressive though charming Slovak; he realized the weight of the German problem. He dreamt of a Czechoslovak Switzerland which would have been, indeed, the ideal solution. In many respects, he resembled his friend, Woodrow Wilson: his ideas were magnificent, but the will and power to execute them were not strong enough.

His younger collaborator, Benes, who probably took over the main burden of creating the new State, lacked the philosophical greatness of his teacher. But it would be wrong to blame Benes alone for the failure to put into practice Masaryk's ideas. His hands were tied to

a certain extent. The immensity of the Allied victory created in the countries profiting by the spoils a mentality beyond human control. No one person could have kept in check the jingoism of the newly liberated Czech nation. In addition, a new army was coming into being. Legionaries returning from France and Italy behaved in those historic days like pocket Napoleons. And French officers, under the leadership of General Mittelhauser, were encouraging this impudent braggadocio of the soldiery. The result was that instead of the idealistic plans of Hussite-humanistic Masaryk, the solutions of the day were chosen here, as everywhere in Europe — namely, the establishment of a united, highly centralized State, under Czech predominance. Three and a half million Germans, who hitherto were, perhaps unjustly, in leading positions in the old Monarchy, were degraded to a kind of second-class nation; the Slovaks, though promised equality and autonomy by Masaryk in Pittsburgh, felt that they were cheated out of charter rights. But French General-Staff officers explained that against the German bully there was need for a united nation, and in the state of inebriety in which the nation and its leaders were in the moment of victory, not much persuasion in this direction was needed.

The most regrettable aspect of these terrible errors was that they were not inevitable. But Benes probably also could not change the course of events because what made him so suitable for the posts which he held was the fact that he was typical of his people, and his virtues and his weaknesses were theirs. Masaryk, probably because of his half-Slovak origin, because of his German education, and because of his years spent in Vienna and other Western capitals, as well as his marriage with an American, was a cosmopolitan. Benes is representative of the Czech middle class. The Bohemian Czech is the hardest-working man in Central Europe, as hard-working and efficient as the Prussian. In fact, he possesses both the virtues and vices of the Prussian. Even the so-called Nordic characteristics, highly stressed by the possessors of power in Berlin, can be applied more to the Bohemians than to the Prussians — one can see more typical 'long-skulled' blonds and people with blue eyes in Prague than in Berlin. After all, the Prussian, like the Bohemian Czech, is a mixture of Teuton and Slav, except that the Prussian speaks a German idiom and the Czech a Slav one.

The Czech is as clean as the Prussian; his house is as pleasantly

arranged as that of a Brandenburg citizen's. But he is also likely to be as unfriendly, snorting, and curt as his Prussian relative. Once, when driving in Czechoslovakia, I lost my way. Five of the people I asked for directions shrugged their shoulders and refused to answer; the sixth gave directions — but intentionally wrong ones. In this sulky unfriendliness, they are different from their Viennese former rulers who almost foolishly go out of their way to help foreigners, and from their charming but lazy Slovak brethren.

The Czech, however, is intensely and passionately patriotic. But as deep as his love for his home, beautiful, undulating rich Bohemia, so deep can be his hatred. For three hundred years the Czechs carried in the secret chambers of their hearts the grudge against the Austrian oppressors who defeated them in the battle of the White Mountain, and then when fortune changed and the Habsburgs' glory passed, they took their revenge. And though their victory was complete, they were unable to give up vindictiveness.

Mustapha Kemal and Venizelos had every reason to hate each other; each inflicted irreparable wounds upon the other's country. But hardly half a decade after the defeat in Asia Minor, the two great statesmen were already seeking ways to eliminate the centuries-long feud. And they succeeded.

Czechoslovakia failed to be magnanimous to her former enemies. It was a mistake to treat the German minority as she treated them. Let us be just: the German had better and more civilized treatment in Czechoslovakia than in any of the neighbouring countries, and certainly much better than in Poland. But the co-operation of so huge a minority — one-fourth of the total population! — and at that a highly civilized national group, should have been gained to a much greater extent than the rulers of Czechoslovakia sought. For even the most hot-headed extremists in this German minority, such as the former leader Lodgmann, never dreamt, in the first fifteen years of the Republic, of breaking away from Czechoslovakia. They were affirming the basic principles of the State and what they aimed at was a national autonomy, mostly of cultural nature. Economic reasons have prompted the otherwise chauvinistic German industrials to remain within the economic boundaries of the Republic; the existing frontiers have given them greater economic advantages than those which would have been derived from a union with Germany. It would have been easy to buy off the Germans of Bohemia, and this the rulers in Prague failed to do.



Old passions were too strong. They felt that the Germans of Austria had kept them in bondage for three centuries, and though for the last five decades the Czechs in Austria enjoyed greater cultural autonomy in the Empire than the Germans do in their Republic, the Czechs had felt themselves oppressed as long as they were not able to obtain financial and economic control of their own lands. And when the victory of the Allies brought them long-wished liberation, they paid back the Germans in their territory with the same coin in which they had been paid in the old days. But the principle of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' is unprofitable. When the Czechs were ready to make better friends with the Germans, it was too late. In 1926 they won the co-operation of the German Agrarians and the Christian Socials, and only later did the German Social Democrats enter the coalition. Reconciliation with the Germans was the work of Masaryk, a belated payment of an old debt. Belated as it was, it constituted a gesture more than praiseworthy, and showed another glimpse of the greatness of the aged President. But the Germans thought that the political truce did not go hand in hand with economic reconciliation. Probably helped by propaganda from without, they believed that their economic decay was the result not of the world crisis, but of systematic spoliation by the rulers of the country. The Czechs again maintained that the ruin of the German industries in Northwestern Bohemia was the direct result of the world economic crisis which hit particularly textile industries, coal mining, and the manufacture of fancy goods which were the typical industries of the German districts. The Germans said that insufficient effort was made to rescue them in days of dearth, and, indeed, the plight in the depressed German areas was appalling. The Czechs, again, show with statistics that proportionately more relief funds have recently been spent in the German districts than in the depressed areas inhabited by Czechs.

This economic plight resulted in the sudden growth of German Nationalist agitation which took partly Nazi and partly Nazi-like forms. The German National-Socialist agitation, and the rise of the Henlein Party, however, will be discussed in another chapter, together with the concessions, intelligent and far-reaching, which the Czechs in 1937 made to the German minority, and which, it is to be hoped, will take the wind out of the sails of the extremists.

Before and during the war the Bohemian, Moravian, and Silesian

parts of what is now Czechoslovakia belonged to the Austrian Empire; Slovakia and the Carpatho-Russian Province to the Kingdom of Hungary. While those Czech and Slovak leaders, who remained at home, could work only clandestinely toward uniting the Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in a Slav Republic, other important leaders, some of them resident in the United States, others in exile there, met in a conference on May 30, 1918, in Pittsburgh, under the chairmanship of Professor Masaryk, who acted as emissary of the Czecho-Slovak National Council. At this conference a document was signed, often called the Pittsburgh Treaty, which was intended to lay the foundation for the co-operation of Czechs and Slovaks in the new State.

In his recently published *Conversations with Karel Capek*, President Masaryk said that while in America he was making preparations for the future Peace Treaty negotiations. In this regard one of his important tasks was to strengthen the unity between Czechs and Slovaks. The Pittsburgh Treaty was probably the weightiest step in this direction and undoubtedly reflects the idealistic liberal spirit which animated Professor Masaryk in those days. While the first paragraph of the treaty provided for the union of the Czechs and Slovaks in one State, other paragraphs ruled:

Slovakia (Slovensko) shall have her own administrative Government, her own Diet, and her own Law Courts.

The Slovak language (Slovenčina) shall be the official language in the schools, offices, and altogether in public life.

This liberal-spirited document, however, later on became the cause of contention between Czechs and Slovaks. Masaryk realized that decent autonomy granted to Slovakia would have been the best way to prepare for co-operation between the two nations. But drunk with victory, those who actually shaped the fate of the new Czecho-slovak State did not permit the realization of the lofty ideals of the President. Centralization became the watchword, and endeavours were made to assure Czech preponderance in Slovakia. From the beginning of the Republic the more extremist rulers in Prague asserted that the Czech and the Slovak languages were identical; they argued that, in reality, the Slovak was only a dialect of the Czech. The Slovaks, however, rejected this theory, and declared that their language, while closely resembling the Czech, was a separate idiom.

There was, of course, a difference between the attitude of the more radical and the more practical wings of the Slovaks. Some important figures of Slovak life, such as Doctor Vincent Srobar and Doctor Milan Hodza, dropped all petty quarrels and, while themselves resenting the too far-reaching centralization attempts in Prague, were willing to act in close collaboration with the new rulers. Thus Hodza after the Revolution entered the National Assembly as representative of the Slovak National Peasant Party. After having been Professor of Slavonic History at the new Comenius University in Bratislava, he was created Minister in December, 1919, with the duty of unifying the legislation of the two parts of the Republic.

But not all Slovaks were as willing to co-operate with Prague as were Srobar and Hodza. The leader of the dissatisfied Slovaks is Monsignor Andrej Hlinka, a Roman Catholic parish priest in Ruzomberok. Hlinka was a fighter for Slovak independence back in the days of the Magyar rule, and he was condemned to two years' imprisonment for agitation against Magyar domination. Hlinka was not permitted to consecrate a church erected in his native village, at Cernova. When on October 27, 1907, a pro-Magyar priest attempted to consecrate the church, the Slovak peasants protested. Without being provoked, the gendarmes used their firearms, killing fifteen Slovaks and wounding sixty.

If Hlinka, however, was a fighter against Magyar hegemony, he also combated Czech domination if such a domination tended to falsify the true characteristics of the Slovaks. Hlinka, when almost in reach of the aims for which he had fought for more than a quarter of a century, saw himself outwitted by the centralistic efforts of Prague. The Czechs cannot forgive him even today for going in 1919 to the Supreme Council in Paris, equipped with a Polish passport, 'at a moment when Poland wanted not only Teschen and Silesia, but also the countries of Spis and Orava.' Hlinka wanted to prevent recognition of the Slovak representatives at the Peace Conference who seemed to him to be submitting too much to Czech supremacy. But he found deaf ears.

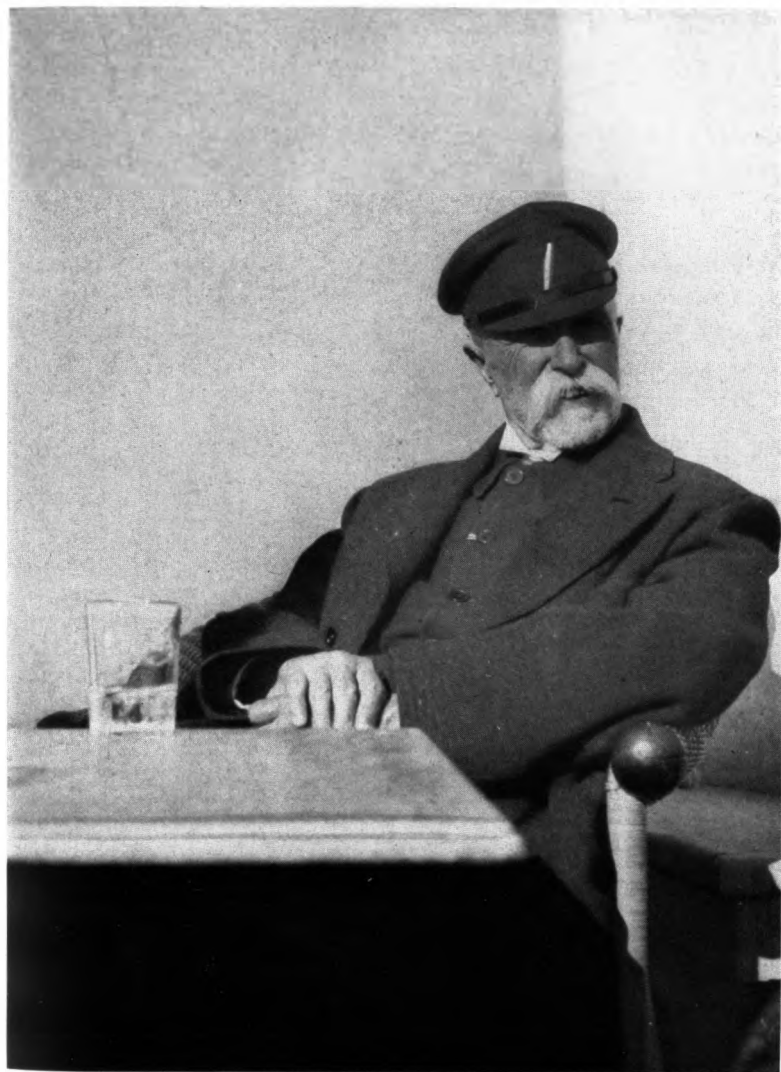
Another Catholic priest, Father Francis Jehlicka, went with Hlinka to Paris, but Jehlicka became so closely involved with the Budapest Governments that his extremist ideas are considered, rightly or wrongly, to be in the service of the Magyar irredentists. Thus, while the extreme opposition of a Jehlicka or Dvorcak is not considered

within the realm of practical politics (both of these are exiles), Father Hlinka's Slovak People's Party must be regarded as representative of the dissatisfied Slovaks.

The truth is that the differences between Czech and Slovak are today rapidly disappearing, but in the beginning the conflict was very severe and the Slovak complaints were undoubtedly justified. There always existed, of course, a wing of Slovak Nationalists who believed more in the common Slav vocation than in the particularist Slovak calling. Dobrovsky and Kollar, for instance, two of the most distinguished fighters for the Slav renaissance in Prague, could be described as Slovaks by origin.

Before the formation of the new Czechoslovakia the Slovak language consisted of various dialects. While the Czechs, who enjoyed a far-reaching cultural autonomy in Austria, had already developed their language to a clear and perfect tongue possessing high literary values and capabilities at the beginning of the past century, the Slovak language, under more repressive Magyar domination, could not unfold its possibilities as the Czech did. There were different groups of Slovak idioms spoken in various parts of the country. The fundamental Slovak is allied, but by no means analogous, to the Czech language. When the Hussites of Bohemia introduced Protestantism amongst the population of Northern Hungary, the Protestant Slovaks accepted the Czech dialect of their preachers as their ecclesiastic tongue. Moreover, some centuries later the Czech revival attracted many Slovaks to Prague, and they produced at the beginning of the last century so many excellent writers that the Czechs began to consider them as their vanguard.

When Hodza and Srobar were entrusted with carrying through the unification of Slovakia with the Bohemian parts, it was one of the great problems to bring into existence a real Slovak language which could be used as the idiom of the people all over the province. And so the Slovak language was compelled to go to school. Thus the Eastern Slovak, which was the language of primitive shepherds with a vocabulary of probably less than one thousand words, had to be adapted to the standard of the more developed Western Slovak. For many years new changes in the language were every day ruled from Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, and when in 1928 during a holiday in Slovakia I tried to convert my knowledge of Kukucin (Eastern Slovak) dialect into the acquisition of the new tongue, my teacher



THOMAS GARRIGUE MASARYK

Savant, philosopher, statesman, maker of the Czechoslovak nation, and its first president.

corrected words which I had learned the day before, with the explanation: 'A decree came today from Bratislava that such and such a verb will be inflected in the future this way, not as I told you yesterday . . .' But by now the Slovak language has completed its 'studies' and has become a full-fledged and completely developed idiom ready for both literary, juridical, technical, and everyday use.

The differences between Czechs and Slovaks, however, are not only linguistic, but also religious and cultural. The religious difference is not so pronounced between Czech and Slovak as it is between Serb and Croat, for both races in Czechoslovakia belong technically to the Roman Catholic Church. But there is a touch of Hussite spirit in the Czechs, and while accepting Roman Catholicism as religion, they resent too much interference of the Church in politics. On the other hand, the Slovak People's Party of Monsignor Hlinka is Catholic Clerical as was the Austrian Christian Social Party. Moreover, the Austrian parts of Czechoslovakia had had all kinds of Czech schools, including a university in Prague and a technical high school in Bruenn, while Slovakia under the Magyar rule had no schools, and certainly no high schools at all. To establish Slovak schools all over the Slovensko Province was an enormous task which the Czechs accomplished with great energy and an admirable efficiency.

Nevertheless, the Slovaks have had plenty of reason to grumble in the past. They complained that all the important offices in Slovakia were filled by Czechs; that the officers and teachers were mostly 'foreigners' (meaning that they were brought from Bohemia), and that the Slovak intelligentsia did not receive the employment due to them under the Pittsburgh Agreement. The Czechs could rightly answer that it was essential that the Czechs run the country after its creation because the Bohemian parts were culturally far more developed and there was almost no Slovak intelligentsia. This was undoubtedly true in the years immediately after the war. But this argument cannot any longer hold true. In the nineteen years since the creation of the Republic a new generation has been educated in the Slovak language. Even those who were adolescent in 1919 could go to Slovak secondary schools and the university in Bratislava, and these people should now be fit to take over the most important offices. The truth is that during the last years an increasing number of Slovak young men have been employed in the railway, local



government, legal and administrative services. The party of Hlinka, of course, demands even further concessions and wishes to receive autonomy for Slovakia. At the elections of 1925 the Slovak People's Party succeeded in securing half a million votes at the polls, out of a total population of less than three millions in Slovakia, and returned twenty-three members to the Prague Parliament. In 1927 they co-operated in the Government Coalition, but at the 1935 elections, where they lost four seats, they remained outside the Government, mainly because of ideological reasons, not wishing to co-operate with Socialist parties. This tendency toward aloofness has increased considerably in the Slovak Party. But it can be hoped that with the Slovak Hodza as Premier, reconciliation between Czech and Slovak will be possible.

The Slovaks realize by now that they must share power in the present State with the Czechs and that an attempt at independence would mean a return to foreign domination — Magyar tyranny or Polish rule. And though there are deep sympathies for the Catholic Poles in Slovakia, the leaders of the Slovaks realize that it would be a bad bargain to change the Czech partnership for a Polish one when the Poles have a reputation of not treating too favourably the subject races in their country. Those Slovaks who benefited by the land reform certainly do not wish to return to Hungarian domination, fearing that the divided estates would be returned to their former owners, though such a possibility is obviously out of the question. And the dissatisfied intelligentsia forms only a small though important section of Slovak public opinion. Under these circumstances, with much good-will it should not be difficult for Prime Minister Hodza to find ways and means for a reconciliation with the Slovaks. There is, of course, the Slovak opposition to the Soviet-Russian treaty which makes some difficulty of agreement. In opposing the Soviet treaty, the Slovaks are unfortunately too much under the thumb of the Vatican. For reasons of existence Czechoslovakia cannot renounce this important treaty until an efficient collective security system replaces it. And yet now that through the attitude of the Nazis in Germany a real reconciliation between Germans and Czechs seems impossible, there remains no other way out for the rulers in Prague than to gain the co-operation of the Slovaks. Such co-operation would convert Czechoslovakia into a predominantly Slav State and the German accusations that the

Prague Government represents only a minority would be powerfully refuted.

This co-operation with Slovakia, should it be established, could be strengthened by the final arrangement of the Carpatho-Russian question. This province is predominantly inhabited by Ruthenians, who are a branch of the Ukrainians. They are Greek-Uniate by religion and speak a dialect of the Ukrainian language which, however, is readily understood by the Eastern Slovaks. It is a very primitive population group completely neglected during the Hungarian rule. The civilizing work of the new Czechoslovak administration in Carpatho-Russia — such as the establishment of schools, road-making, creation of new offices and healthy building accommodations, and the introduction of sanitary conditions — is one of its magnificent achievements. Eight milliard Czech kronen (about seventy-two million pounds sterling) are said to have been spent during the last eighteen years for the reconstruction of that country. But there is a certain amount of unrest in Carpatho-Russia. The Peace Treaty promised to this land autonomy which it has not yet obtained. The argument in the past was that education and intelligence in Carpatho-Russia was at such low level that an autonomous Ruthenia would have gone Communist. But by now a new generation has been educated which should be available for leadership and administration in the province.

Much of the unrest in Slovakia and Carpatho-Russia is due to the unhappy clumsiness of the Czech rulers. The Hungarian ruler was a tyrant; he terrorized the Slovaks and the Ukrainians in a revolting manner. The Magyar gentry often struck the Slovak labourers and had the Ukrainian agricultural hands beaten up. But he was charming, and his easy manners, his occasional generosity (in small matters) made the Slovaks forget his blows. The Czech official is not a tyrant, but the bureaucrat for whom only the letter of the law exists. Then the Czech, if he is sent to the Slovakian province, immediately enters the Czech Sokol organization, has his own *spolocnost*, and this co-operative shop obtains all goods from the Bohemian parts. The Czechs separate themselves from the Slovaks, and the Slovak traders resent the fact that the officials, who are paid by the very high taxes raised in the country, do not spend their money in Slovakia, but get their goods from Prague or Bruenn. Moreover, in many Slovak places even the soldiers are not permitted to enter the

local inns and cafés, whereas in Hungarian days the soldiers spent a great deal of money in the local places of entertainment. The Hungarian officials, who belonged to the gentry class, spent money lavishly in the cafés and restaurants, and this made the Slovaks often forget their insults and tyrannies.

It is the same way in Carpatho-Russia. There the Jewish population (and they constitute an important part of the inhabitants) are now all pro-Magyar. Why? The Magyar treated him contemptibly, but at least he had his grocers' shop or his spirit *boutique* in which he sold *schnapps* to the Slovak labourers. The efficient Czech penetrated everywhere, and he is the grocer, the innkeeper, and the spirit merchant in Ruthenia. He thus deprived the Jew of his economic basis. The Jew has been enfranchised during the new régime, he benefits from the new Slovak schools and from the improved sanitary conditions, but he has lost his economic existence. These were great mistakes, but they are not irreparable. And if Slovakia and Carpatho-Russia, both inhabited by kindred and allied Slav nations, can be pacified and can be won over to final and voluntary co-operation, then the problem of Czechoslovakia is probably solved.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SOUTH SLAVS

'I HAVE a great, an almost gigantic task. I am called to weld together the two great South-Slav peoples, the Serbs and Croats, into one national unit. I fully realize that this task is as enormous as it is dangerous. But nothing can deter me from completing my mission.' These are the words of Alexander Karageorgevitch, second King of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and first King of Yugoslavia, uttered in 1924, two years after he ascended the throne. Ten years after he made this statement, he died for this task which he could not achieve.

The Yugoslav idea, of course, was not the invention of King Alexander I. At the beginning of the past century, great scholars, both in Serbia and in the Croatian parts of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, not only considered the possibility of evolving a common Serbo-Croatian language from the two vernaculars, but contemplated also the political union of the two nations. This union of the South Slavs, indeed, remained a more strongly motivating idea amongst the South Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy than with the Serbs before the war. The Serbs encouraged the Slav movement in Austria and Hungary, but those who ruled pre-war and wartime Serbia dreamed more of a Greater Serbia than of a South-Slav union.

Pre-war Serbia had two masters: the Prime Minister, Nichola Pasitch, and the army clique, known as the *Ujedinjenje ili Smrt* (Unity or Death), and popularly called the *Cerna Ruža* (Black Hand). The leader of this organization was Dragutin Dimítríevitch, nicknamed 'Apis.'

Nichola Pasitch was the most important person, not only in making Serbia what she was before the war, but also in forging the links of a future Yugoslavia. For sixty years his figure dominated Serbian politics. He was of Bulgarian origin, and in his youth spoke Serbian

with decided difficulty. He was educated as an engineer and completed his studies in Zurich. He became a follower of the radical ideas of Bakunin and founded with Peter Velimirovitch the Radical Party which until today has remained the leading party in Serbia. But today it is the representative of conservative Serbian ideas, while in 1878 it was a truly radical party, such as would certainly be described by the present 'Radical' Premier as a Communist Party.

Pasitch's strength in politics was not so much in action as in intrigues behind the scenes, as well as in the enviable quality of possessing no nerves. In 1922 (he was then seventy-seven years old) a Communist shot at him through the window of his motor-car. Without changing his expression, Pasitch slipped to the floor of the car, and so, out of danger, rolled away. He lived through the whole of modern European history. He saw Serbia a tiny nation, with the bulk of her lands under Turkish domination; he saw the Turks driven out; he saw the consolidation of modern Italy; he saw the defeat of France by Germany and the rise of the modern German Empire, and, in turn, the defeat of Germany by France; and finally he saw the union of the South Slavs. Yet the conception of the South-Slav State was not his. His name is not coupled with the rise of Yugoslavia in the sense that Masaryk's is associated with the foundation of Czechoslovakia. He was the founder of a party, not of a nation; a manipulator of power; an entrenched personality. And yet his steady 'wait and see' policy resulted in the birth of the Yugoslavia which we know today.

The army clique, the Black Hand, was a welcome tool for Pasitch. This group was created to murder King Alexander Obrenovitch I of Serbia in 1903. After the murder the group kept together; and following the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria, it renewed its secret, underground activities, this time attempting to foment unrest among the Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia. After the meeting of Kaiser Wilhelm II with Archduke Francis Ferdinand, in Konopischt in the early spring of 1914, the Black Hand conspirators decided to murder the Archduke. This stern, quarrelsome Austrian Crown Prince was regarded as a danger to the Pan-Serbian aspirations. Emperor Francis Joseph was old; and should Francis Ferdinand succeed him, Serbia knew that an attempt would be made to detach the Slav parts from both Austria and Hungary, and to convert the Austrian Empire into a triune kingdom, consisting of

Austria, Hungary, and South Slavia. This South-Slav State would have contained Slovenia, Croatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Dalmatia. Such a solution would probably have satisfied the Slavs within the Monarchy, and this the Serb nationalists wished to prevent. With the cognizance of the Russian General Staff (with whom Dimitrievitch was in contact through the medium of the Russian Military Attaché, General Artamanoff) the murder of the Archduke was carried out on June 28, 1914. This murder brought about the Great War, which, in turn, caused the invasion of Serbia by German and Austrian troops; but as the Allies emerged victorious from this Armageddon, Serbia was born to new life on the ruins. A much greater Serbia, which obtained as a present the former South-Slav provinces of the collapsed Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, now was created.

It must be said in Pasitch's defence that he, in reality, never wished too ardently the union of all South Slavs. The old Serbian politician dreamt only of a Greater Serbia. It is true that Pasitch signed in July, 1917, the Pact of Corfu which envisaged the union of all the South Slavs, but who thought in the dark days of 1917 that this document could become the foundation of a new State? Masaryk, when he signed the Treaty of Pittsburgh with the Slovaks some months later, did so with the conviction that he would keep the terms of the agreement, and if things took a different course, it was due rather to his weakness than to his bad faith. But Pasitch signed the document in bad faith: he never intended to keep such an agreement. Thus he sent on October 19, 1918, a confidential telegram from Paris to the Prince Regent (later King Alexander) in which he said: 'The connections between the different tribes of our race are not sufficiently known abroad and it is not realized what the word Yugoslavia means; they believe that it means something different from the word Serbia.'

Naturally the non-Serbian members of the Yugoslav committee were dreaming of a free union of the South-Slav peoples and not their incorporation into a Serbia, such as Pasitch and the Serbian politicians imagined. On October 29, 1918, the Zagreb National Council, composed of representatives of the South-Slav parts of the old Monarchy, declared the independence of these *Preichani* parts. But other representatives of these parts of Yugoslavia beyond Serbia proper assembled also in Geneva, under the leadership of the Slovene

deputy, Father Anton Korosec, and the Croatian Lorkovitch, and discussed how to construct the new State. In the declaration of Geneva on November 9, 1918, it was agreed to arrange the formation of a Cabinet in which six Ministers of the Zagreb National Council would sit next to six Ministers appointed by Belgrade. Two further seats were reserved for the Montenegrins, whose country was to join the union, but was later cheated of its entire existence. The Ministers appointed by the Zagreb Assembly were to swear allegiance to Zagreb; those appointed by the Serbian rulers to Belgrade. This Ministry, which lasted exactly one day, was called the 'Hotel Cabinet,' because it was created and was in session in hotels. But the Serbs opposed this solution. It was impossible to swear allegiance in the divided way the Pretchannis proposed, argued the Serbs.

Time, however, was pressing for a quick solution. Italy was violently opposing the union of the South Slavs, and this opposition was increasingly felt now in Belgrade. Swetozar Pribitchevitch, a Serb from the Croatian parts, now did great services to Prince Regent Alexander, and the so-called proclamation of the union followed on December 1, 1918. The Zagreb Council decided on November 24 to proclaim the union of the State of the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs with Serbia and Montenegro into one State. The Prince Regent replied to this declaration; and his answer, according to the Serbian thesis, became the foundation of the union. The Croats maintain that the delegation which was led by Pribitchevitch had been sent to Belgrade to negotiate the basis of the union, but not to effect it. Pribitchevitch, who now became a servant of Belgrade, informed the Zagreb Assembly on December 3 that, the union having been effected, they were dissolved.

The unfortunate mentality of victory caused the new State which, by its construction, is destined probably to become the strongest of the new countries created by the Peace Treaties, to contain the seeds of discord and disagreement. The majority of the Croats objected to the decisions of December 1. 'Serbian sovereignty was established *via facti* — thus the foundations of the new State were built wrong,' argued the Croat leaders.

It is somewhat difficult for a foreigner to realize the differences that exist between Serbs and Croats. The Allied statesmen, who during the war received the mass of propaganda in the interest of the creation of a new South-Slav State, must have been bewildered.



Here were two nations akin to each other both in race and language. Serbs and Croats were branches of the Slavonic migration which left Northern Europe in the sixth century and settled in the sixth and seventh centuries in the territories which now constitute Yugoslavia. Thus there is the common cradle, the brotherly and neighbourly life after the immigration; and there is the almost common language. And yet both nations carefully preserve their own traditions, history, culture, and other peculiarities, and neither is willing to sacrifice these peculiarities to the idea of the creation of a homogeneous nation.

There is, indeed, a whole world between Serbs and Croats. It is true that this difference was created almost by accident. Many centuries ago, the Serbs came under Eastern influence when they were converted to the Greek Orthodox Church; and the Croats under Latin influence through joining the Roman Catholic Church; and this decisively determined the different shaping of their culture. To this must be added that Croatia in the Middle Ages remained partly under Venetian culture (only the Bosnian Croats were subjects of Islamic rule), while the whole of Serbia fell victim to Osmanli aggression at the end of the fourteenth century, and remained under Turkish yoke until the beginning of the past century. This strong Turkish influence one can still feel in Belgrade; Zagreb, on the other hand, during the last centuries came under the civilizing influence of Vienna.

The continuous Turkish oppression and probably the permanent fight for the maintenance of the racial and tribal unity under the Turkish terror shaped the Serbian character differently from that of his Croatian brethren. The Croatian is not a genius; he is clever, but slow-witted; he is careful, uninspiring. He has good and charming manners and gives the same civilized impression that an Austrian gives. The Dalmatian Croat is somewhat different. He is very often of the Illyrian race, extremely good-looking and temperamental. While the Dalmatian shows revolutionary features in his character, the Croatian from Croatia proper is oppositional but not revolutionary. Even the Hungarians, who were masters in subduing the subject races in their country, could never finish with their Croats, and had to grant them far-reaching autonomy.

The Serb is of a different make. He is, as a rule, very good-looking, domineering, quick-witted, and clever; he is sly and intriguing (and

this he learned during the days of the Turkish oppression); he is very temperamental, often of overbounding nature. He wants to be master, loves to fight and hates to work. The Serb is certainly the most charming individual person in Central and South Europe, and nobody who has enjoyed Serbian hospitality will disagree with me. But he is impulsive and aggressive, and from the beginning the Serb underestimated the Croats' apparent inertia. Serbian aggressiveness is like that of the mountain torrent; Croatian opposition is like the corroding force of the sea.

The fundamental mistakes committed in the creation of the new State are responsible for the present Serbo-Croat conflict. The mass of the Croatian people identified themselves with the movement known as the Croatian Peasant Party, the leader of which was the clever Croatian peasant, Stephen Raditch. He was a strange figure. Small, but broad-shouldered, with small shrewd but shortsighted peasant eyes, a round face, a shabby grey beard, and a large nose, he looked the typical representative of his class. But Raditch had a thorough education. Most of his knowledge he acquired in the bookshop which he possessed in Zagreb, but one must keep in mind that he studied at the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques in Paris. He was polyglot, spoke seven or eight languages, probably every one badly but fluently: his speech always fell like a torrent.

An excellent political speaker, he knew how to captivate his audience. If he was speaking in a village, the peasants from twenty and thirty miles around came to listen. To a neutral observer this mesmerizing effect of the small, shrieking peasant was unintelligible. I once asked a near relative of his the reason for Raditch's extraordinary success with his audience. 'He always said what he knew that they were feeling. That is: he said what they expected him to say. He never "came to teach"; he tried to put the feeling of the masses into words . . .' was the answer. He loved to use parables from peasant life. Once he explained how small nations should behave if the Great Powers fight among themselves. 'The small ones should get out of the way. A blow brings a big man into the hospital, but a small one into the grave,' he said. He always preached reliance on one's own strength and against hope for salvation from without. 'Woe to those who seek bread in foreign haversacks,' he argued. He never told the Croats to believe in him. His argument was: 'Believe only in God; if I tell you something,

then judge it for yourself. . . . ' Social justice was a constant argument of his: 'A State without social justice is a frame without a picture, a vase without flowers.'

In December, 1918, when Yugoslav unity was proclaimed in a form unacceptable to the Croats, Raditch took up the leadership of the opposition. Most of the Croats, of course, realized, and still realize, that they must remain together with the Serbs in one State. They are intelligent enough to know that there is no place in Europe for another small State; they also realize that co-operation either with the Italians or with the Hungarians is impossible. They do not deny the right of existence of a South-Slav State; they wish, however, this State to be run on federal lines and want at least as much autonomy as they enjoyed under Magyar rule when they had their own Diet in Zagreb, and when they were practically independent except in matters of foreign policy and military affairs. Even in army matters they had their own regiments with Croatian command; and these battalions could be taken to a foreign country only with the permission of the Zagreb *Sabor* (Parliament).

It was obvious from the first that in days of European chaos such far-reaching demands could not be conceded, but, on the other hand, the methods by which the Belgrade rulers answered the Croatian claims were not likely to bring peace to the dissatisfied Croats. A wholesale persecution of the Croats began, under the direction of the Minister of the Interior, Pribitchevitch. When Raditch converted his movement into a mass activity, Pribitchevitch ordered his arrest in 1919, without any law court decision. 'You arrest him on my own personal responsibility,' boasted Pribitchevitch. A hideous terror, exercised by Serbian gendarmes and by various freebooters, began. The henchmen of Pribitchevitch were called *Batinasi* (floggers), because they used bastinados to punish the politically 'unsafe' elements. The Serbs organized the State on a centralized basis, and on June 28, 1921, the centralized Vidovdan Constitution was introduced by a rump Parliament.

Raditch then was released and went into exile in Austria, where he tried to win European support for the Croatian cause. He also visited London, and when the MacDonald Government recognized Moscow, Raditch visited the Russian capital, still regarding the Russians as the supporters of the Slavs.

After his return to Zagreb, the Davidovitch Government was

founded in the autumn of 1924 with his support. But then the *Obznana* of Pasitch, who had once more returned to power, ordered his arrest, this time on a charge of Communist activities because he had been to Moscow. I wonder whether Pasitch recalled his own youth when in 1899 he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment on similar charges. Statesmen easily forget! How many people, for instance, have had to suffer since Mussolini came to power in Italy for 'crimes' of which the Duce was himself accused only a few years before the war?

When the February elections in 1925 brought an overwhelming majority for Raditch in Croatia, he was pardoned, and his party entered the Government. Raditch wanted to show by practical work how to abolish the differences between Serbs and Croats. But two years later they again were forced into opposition, and on June 20, 1928, the shots fired in the *Skuptchina* (Parliament) itself by the Montenegrin deputy, Punisha Ratchitch, not only killed two of the leading Croatian deputies and mortally wounded Stephen Raditch, but also destroyed the chances of Serbo-Croat reconciliation for a long time to come.

On January 6, 1929, King Alexander declared his own dictatorship, with General Pera Zifkovitch acting as his Prime Minister.

Alexander Karageorgevitch I was not born to rule. His elder brother, Prince George, was the Crown Prince. But Prince George was not a healthy man. In Saint Petersburg doctors had already discovered signs of nervous attacks which bordered on lunacy. And the superstitious Serbs were deeply agitated when in 1904 a gipsy woman suddenly shouted in the presence of the assembled royal family:

'Where is the young King? I want to see the *kraljevitch*!'

When a gendarme pointed to George, the gipsy woman shook her head and said: 'That is not the young King. He is a sick man and he will soon be a prisoner.' Then she discovered Alexander and shouted: 'This man and nobody else will be your King.'

Everybody laughed, except two men in the company. The one was Jasha Nenadovitch who had brought the two Princes from Russia to Serbia, and who had in his pocket the doctor's expert opinion about George's mental debility. The other man was the twenty-five-year-old First Lieutenant Pera Zifkovitch. The lieutenant was already an intimate friend of the young Prince Alex-

ander; and soon was to be of great service to his patron when Prince George in a moment of rage kicked his valet with his spurred heel so brutally that the servant died. Both George and Alexander had partisans in the country. The opponents of George demanded his resignation. George's partisans argued that the King can abdicate, but a Crown Prince — never! Zifkovitch took matters into his own hands, visited all editorial offices in Belgrade, and persuaded the press to accept his cleverly put arguments.

Under the pressure of public opinion, King Peter demanded George's resignation, and thus Prince Alexander became heir to the Serbian throne. The friendship between Alexander and Zifkovitch lasted until the King's untimely death.

Even as a boy Alexander's slyness had been clearly revealed. One day his father brought a toy cannon for his eldest son. He noticed Alexander watching his brother with eager eyes.

'Do you want such a toy also?' asked Peter.

'No, papa,' answered Alexander. 'I prefer to have you give me the money that it would cost. I know George will be tired of it in a day or two, and then I can buy it from him cheap.'

Alexander had great qualities. He was a good soldier, and his men adored him during the war. He was a great statesman, and if at home he did not achieve what seems to be the right solution, he honestly thought that his solution was the best.

He wanted to weld all the Slavs in the realm of the Yugoslavs into a united kingdom, abolishing all racial, religious, and linguistic differences, and creating a South-Slav State. In respect of foreign politics he increased the value of Yugoslavia as an ally, and while in the first years of the existence of the new State he relied on the French alliance system, later on, when his country became strong and powerful, he had chosen the slogan, "The Balkans for the Balkan peoples," which meant liberation of the Balkans from the devastating influence of the Great Powers, most of whom had an axe to grind in those parts. As Alexander's Yugoslavia had become the strongest single State (Turkey counts more as an Asiatic Power) in the Balkans, his motto naturally meant that his country was to play first fiddle in this new concert. And while the initiative for the Balkan Entente came first from the Greek and later from the Turkish side, Alexander realized the importance of this new alliance system and he became one of its strongest promoters.

Nevertheless, his faults were as many as his virtues. While he sincerely wished a united Yugoslavia, he secretly hoped that this would yield a dominating influence to the Serbs. His solution was opposed by the Croats, and thus could not lay the foundations of a strong Power. Only a satisfied Croatia could have yielded, or can yield, a firm basis for that Balkan Power which was Alexander's ideal. The faults were not all on his side. The Croats often made propositions which, when accepted by Alexander, turned out to be disadvantageous to them. Thus undoubtedly Raditch was wrong when in an audience on February 19, 1928, he advised the King to choose a general as Premier to solve the problems which weighed heavily on the country. Raditch had General Hadjitch, who then was War Minister, in mind.

The reasoning of Raditch was, as he said later: 'The generals are not dangerous if Parliament calls them to power; they are dangerous only if they come on their own initiative, because then they try to tread down Parliament!' But he put a bee into Alexander's bonnet, and eleven months after this advice had been given — Raditch was then already dead — Alexander called a general, his friend Zifkovitch, to direct the affairs of the realm.

But before this King Alexander, in a desperate mood, even threatened the amputation of Croatia. Pribitchevitch has described in his book how, seventeen days after the shooting affray in the Skuptchina, the King asked him to come to see him. Raditch was in a hospital at that time, dying of the wounds inflicted by the assassin. The King said: 'I hear that Mr. Raditch is leaving Belgrade tomorrow for Zagreb. Will you kindly transmit to him the following message so that separation may be proclaimed tomorrow in Zagreb? We cannot remain any longer united with the Croats. I do not want war with them; let us separate in peace, as did Sweden and Norway. If Mr. Raditch accepts my proposal, he can proclaim separation tomorrow. We will recall our troops, leaving only some units at the frontier so that it cannot be said that we left the country without defence against Italy. As soon as the national defence has been organized, we will recall those units too.'

'I cannot believe, Your Majesty,' said Pribitchevitch, 'that you mean this. It is treason. If your Ministers have approved this proposal, they ought to be arrested for high treason.' Pribitchevitch added that no one in Croatia wanted separation; they wanted only federalism.

Two days later the King renewed this offer, not only to Pribitchevitch, but also to the Slovene leader Jeriav. Pribitchevitch urged the King to appoint the dying Raditch as Premier. 'Only he could solve the crisis,' pleaded Pribitchevitch. 'If he dies as Prime Minister, his funeral will be the glorification of the dynasty and of national union. If he dies as leader of the Croats, his funeral will be the beginning of the dislocation of the State.' But the King imposed such conditions that Raditch could not accept.

The dictatorship of Zifkovitch which followed could not solve the problems. In September, 1931, the King gave a kind of constitution which, however, was strongly disapproved by Serbs and Croats alike. And yet toward 1934 it seemed that, owing to the lack of energy on the part of the opposition, the King was consolidating his power in the country. It looked as if the terror was achieving a victory over the passive resistance of the opposition. And then suddenly the bullet of Kelemen-Cernosemski killed King Alexander in Marseilles.

While the funeral seemed to be a great reconciling influence in the country — Croat men and women wept along the railway line as the train with the royal coffin proceeded — a few weeks later the forces beneath the cauldron suddenly became obvious. There was opposition everywhere. The short régime of Bogoljub Yeftitch, the Foreign Minister who was with Alexander in Marseilles, was swept away; and his successor, Milan Stoyadinovitch, realized that the wrongly buttoned waistcoat must be unbuttoned. The strict laws of the dictatorship were no longer enforced, though the same old Constitution remained in existence. But the spirit of it had been changed. In December, 1936, the Prince Regent, Paul Karageorgevitch, received Matchek in audience in Castle Brdo in Slovenia, and in January, 1937, the first meeting between Premier Milan Stoyadinovitch and Raditch's successor as leader of the Croatian Peasant Party, Doctor Vladimir Matchek, took place near Bresice — the first meeting of a Croat leader with a Yugoslav Premier since the shooting of Raditch. Though a long way will have to be travelled before real friendship and complete understanding is possible between Serbs and Croats — a nineteen-year feud needs careful burying — the present system of approach, if the signs do not blind us, seems to be the right one.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE CINDERELLA OF THE BALKANS

'THE Orient begins at the Landstrasse,' said Metternich. 'Though the Landstrasse today is a fine residential district of Vienna, while a hundred years ago it was only an eastern suburb, Metternich's saying still holds. If you go east from Vienna, you feel immediately that you are crossing the invisible frontier of another civilization. And yet it is extremely difficult to establish where the Balkans start or end. Cynics and pessimists claim that the Balkans have extended to the North Sea.

If you go in quest of the Balkans, you are sure to meet surprises. Ask the Magyars and they will protest fiercely, and probably with much right on their side, that they do not belong to the Balkans. The Yugoslavs will remonstrate equally loudly, while the Rumanians, if you 'offend' them with such a base suggestion, hasten to explain that their capital is a miniature replica of Paris, that they are Latins by race and that the Latin spirit everywhere dominates their population. This fact prevents them, they will assure you, from becoming part and parcel of the Balkans, even if their geographical situation does suggest at least a faint connection with the peninsula of that ominous name. Very loud will be the protest of the Greeks, too. They are, after all, successors of a race which gave culture and civilization to this continent of Europe. They belong to the Balkans? How absurd!

There is only one Balkan country which does not mind being called a Balkan State, and this is Bulgaria. The Bulgarians are proud that the Balkan mountain range, which runs across the country as if to provide Bulgaria with a strong backbone, is in the heart of their land and that from this mountain chain the peninsula has obtained its name.

Yet Bulgaria, and more especially her capital, Sofia, strikes the

newcomer as less Balkan than that of any of her neighbours. In Belgrade, despite its rapid development, the mixture of new modern palaces with ramshackle, low buildings, the dirt and din of the improperly paved streets, the ragged dresses of the lower strata of the population, the dazzling uniforms of the officers and the miserable khaki of the common soldier suggest immediately that one has arrived at the gate of the Orient; a gate which, of course, is spelled B-a-l-k-a-n-s. The impression given by Bucharest is similar. The splendid dresses of the ladies and the gorgeous and operetta-like uniforms of the officers present a crying contrast to the miserable attire of the rest of the population, while the palaces on the Callea Victorei are too close for convenience to hovels the like of which one can find only in the deserted boggy parts of Ireland. But Sofia is different. It is the only Balkan capital which gives, even at the first superficial inspection, the impression of cleanliness and order. The dirty, dusty streets of Athens and Belgrade or Istanbul are absent; the thoroughfares of the inner city, covered with yellow ceramic bricks, help to convey an impression of neatness. As the rich themselves are badly dressed and as even the better-class women do not promenade in evening dresses in unholy morning hours on the fashionable streets, the poverty of the lower strata is not so striking as in towns of the neighbouring countries.

In the order and cleanliness of Sofia there is a distinct Prussian touch; and to some extent also in the ambition and efficiency of the population. Four hours distant, as the airplane flies, we find tens of thousands of cars hustling through the melting asphalt of summer Athens; on the atrocious cobblestones of Beyoglu (Pera) in Istanbul fast cars and innumerable tramcars speed on the slopes of hilly streets; but Sofia has little traffic to worry about. Here and there a rickety taxi speeds through the streets; and occasionally a luxurious motor-car can be seen, or an officer will drive through the Dondukoff Boulevard with a lady friend, seated in a horse-drawn carriage, which still counts as the most fashionable conveyance east and southeast of Vienna; but that's all. There are comparatively few people in the streets, for the Bulgarian works hard, either in offices or in the fields, and has no time to promenade. Only on Saturday evenings or on Sundays is there a crowd strolling on the Boulevard Tsar Osvoboditel, though all other inhabitants of the Balkans find time to promenade at all hours of the day, all days of the week.

Sofia has the appearance of a sad city, and Bulgaria of a wearied country. She is the Cinderella of the Balkans. She never was a gay country, nor was her capital ever a cheerful city. The Bulgarian is not licentious as some of his northern and western neighbours; the morality of men and women is high.

The sadness of the Bulgarian is not simply a part of the frequently melancholy disposition of the Slav. The Russian or the Serbian is moody, and if such a frame of mind overtakes him, then he can be sad. But this melancholy can easily turn into wild joy and delight. Not so with the Bulgarian. His sadness appears to be a permanent attribute. It is perhaps resignation to fate — they have been through all kinds of disappointments during the last century, though most of these frustrations were of their own contriving, the result of the boundless jingoism and ambitions of their political leaders. In 1878, when the Treaty of San Stefano created the new Principality of Bulgaria, they obtained practically all the territories they now covet; but some of the Powers, regarding them only as the tools of Russia, vetoed this large increase of the new State; and the Treaty of Berlin shaved down considerably the frontiers of this proud country. Once more, in the autumn of 1912, through their victories over the Turks, they were within reach of their old aims in Macedonia when their boundless pride and unaccommodating nature brought them into conflict with their Serbian ally; and in the war which followed they were deprived of the fruits of their victory. Once more, during the Great War, they fought valiantly, but again on the wrong side. And after the war, though they became more cautious, the Macedonian question caused them to be bullied by their neighbours left and right. Thus Bulgaria became the Cinderella of the Balkans.

The two outstanding problems of post-war Bulgaria are the social problem and the Macedonian question. The social problem, to a great extent, is a question of the improvement of the lot of the peasants, who constitute eighty per cent of the population. Bulgaria is a typical peasant country, but this agricultural population is very poor and its methods still backward. Forty-five per cent of the peasants own less than five acres each of arable land; and yet only one landowner out of every thousand holds more than two hundred and fifty acres. The country thus is the land of the small holders. Life in the villages is primitive, almost patriarchal; and as is often the case in Slav lands, marks of former tribal existence survive. The

family, as a rule, is under the leadership of the eldest, and lives in a farmyard centring on the house of the eldest, the *stareshtina*, surrounded by the houses of the other members. In spite of Bulgarian industry and ambition, the country is poor and means of improving agricultural production are lacking.

Great progress in the improvement of the lot of the peasant was made under the rule of Alexander Stambolisky, the Peasant Dictator. The organized peasant movement originated at the beginning of the present century, but it attained its real importance only after the war when Bulgaria came out of the struggle a defeated and humiliated nation. All the pro-Germans who helped to bring Bulgaria into the war on what proved later to be the losing side were discredited. Only the Agrarian Party could boast that its leaders had opposed Bulgaria's participation on the side of Germany. Dimitr Draghieff and Alexander Stambolisky were the leaders of this party, which, under the name of Agrarian League, wished by constitutional means to increase agricultural production, to the benefit both of the country and of the individual peasant. Draghieff, the League's leader before and during the war, was a meek and modest though absolutely honest figure. Alexander Stambolisky was more aggressive and domineering. A peasant with a high-school education, he was huge and broad-shouldered, with an enormous head adorned by bushy and curly black hair and an uptwisted black moustache. His fierce dark eyes gave him the appearance of the villain in the films. But this bully-looking and bully-like leader had a gentle heart for the great majority of his people. His ideals, both in domestic and foreign politics, differed, however, greatly from those of his compatriots. He cherished the idea of a union of all South Slavs in the Balkans. I once heard him say: 'We are all peasants here in the Balkans. If in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, and Bulgaria the peasant, who constitutes the majority of each nation, were to come to power, it would be the easiest thing imaginable to bring into harmony the aims of these peasants and end the deadly enmity between the various Slav peoples.'

In 1913, immediately after the defeat of the Bulgarians by the Serbs, Stambolisky, then only an unimportant agitator of the Agrarian League, declared that he was a South Slav in the first place and a Bulgarian only in the second. In 1915, when King Ferdinand of Bulgaria determined to side with the Germans, Stam-

bolisky said to him: 'If you do so, you will lose your throne.' For this warning he was imprisoned until the Bulgarian front collapsed and his prophecy came true.

In the wake of defeat and of seething unrest he was called into power as Prime Minister, after having served as delegate of Bulgaria in Versailles. He immediately initiated legislation to improve conditions for the suffering Bulgarian peasant. The land reform which he introduced was well meant, but it could not be of fundamental importance in a country which lacked large estates. On the other hand, his measures to improve the educational system and to help peasants through the medium of enlarged and strengthened co-operatives were extremely successful. During his four years of rule he did more for the peasant than any other régime before or after him has done. But while the peasants adored him, he was loathed by the town intelligentsia, the professors, teachers, lawyers, medical doctors, and so forth. The intellectual classes had been accustomed to fill all positions in the State administration, but Stambolisky had chosen most of his collaborators from the ranks of his own people. This created a blind hatred amongst the middle classes, who enjoyed the clandestine support of the army officers, and especially of the reserve officers who have always played an important rôle in Bulgarian politics. The hatred of these 'intellectual' classes appears somewhat strange to those who recall that the educated classes were themselves sons of the peasants, since during the Turkish rule the Bulgarians could not fill any office in their own country because the Turkish masters coveted for themselves all the fat jobs. But as the foreman who rises from low rank to his job is the worst tormentor of his workers, so the Bulgarian intelligentsia, relieved of the bondage of their fathers, hated in the secret chamber of their hearts the class from which they had risen. The middle classes alone, and even the reserve officers, would not have sufficed to upset the régime of the Peasant Dictator. His policy at home was so popular that it could not be challenged on internal political issues. But there was his foreign policy.

Alexander Stambolisky believed sincerely in the possibility of an understanding with Yugoslavia. Such a co-operation — and who knows? it might even have resulted in a union — would have brought together nineteen million people who for the greater part were and are Slavs and — peasants. On the occasion of signing the

Neuilly Peace Treaty in Versailles, Stambolisky, then first delegate of Bulgaria to the Peace Conference, wrote to the Premiers of Greece, Rumania, and Serbia, suggesting that they all forget the feuds of the past in fruitful co-operation in the interest of the peace and prosperity of their respective nations. His enemies accused him of unwise and uncouth action. 'Why, Pasitch did not even answer his letter,' the Macedonians jeered. But Stambolisky did not lose courage. And in 1921 his War Minister, Dimitroff, was received in a long audience by this same Pasitch. In March, 1923, delegates of the Yugoslavs and Bulgarians who came together in Nish agreed to eliminate the differences between the two countries. In order to diminish friction, Stambolisky promised in this Nish Agreement, as we have already seen, to keep in check the Macedonians who had caused much trouble to the Serb authorities.

The Macedonians allied themselves with the League of Reserve Officers, and during the night of June 9-10, 1923, the conspirators overthrew Stambolisky. The peasant Ministers were arrested or fled, and Stambolisky was brutally murdered in his home town, Tatar-Pasardjik. His body was cut to pieces and thrown onto the dung-heap.

And this brings us to the story of the Macedonians.

One day in 1924, the glass turnstile door of the Café Imperial in Vienna grated, and in walked two sturdy fellows. I was seated at the table where we journalists were accustomed to gather to watch and discuss events. The two fellows, whose dark skin and dark hair gave away their Balkan origin, walked across the café with vigilant eyes, though pretending to be completely uninterested in events in the café. Then they chose seats at vantage-points where they could easily watch people entering or leaving. Ten minutes later the same procedure was repeated, and two more Balkans, intending to look just as unobtrusive as their predecessors, carefully inspected the café and then chose a table at the window where they could observe the persons about to enter the café from outside. Once more the heavy door grated as it was turned round by energetic hands, and a small, sturdy man entered. An intelligent face, with keen dark eyes, dark hair and black beard, a steady, quick, somewhat too self-conscious gait — and the new arrival headed straight for our table. It was Todor Alexandroff, the leader of the Macedonian Revolutionary

movement. The four people who had entered the café previously were his bodyguards. For wherever he moved he was accompanied by a dozen or more people who were ready to sacrifice their lives for their leader.

I had known Todor Alexandroff from previous years when I had once the opportunity to meet him in the midst of his band, in the mountains of Gorna Djumaja. My Macedonian companions then staged a little act for me and pretended that they were taking me to Serbian territory to meet the 'great chief' — I had been blindfolded at the 'frontier,' and as shots were fired, my host whispered: 'The Serbs are shooting after our car.' But I was conscious all the time that we had remained, after long detours and prolonged rides, within Bulgarian territory. There, near a campfire, dressed as a *comitadji*, with a quaint felt helmet on his head, with crossbones and skull, I made the acquaintance of Todor Alexandroff, the leader of the Macedonian Revolution.

The Macedonian problem has been the bone of contention between Bulgars and Serbs for fifty years. Before the middle eighties of the last century, the Slavs living in Macedonia were left by the Serbs to the Bulgarians, and when the Bulgarian exarchate (independent Church) was established, the Bulgarian clergy succeeded in bringing the Macedonian Slavs into its flock. Moreover, the Macedonian language, or dialect, is undoubtedly nearer to the Bulgarian than to the Serb.

The Serbo-Bulgarian feud over Macedonia in reality started only in 1885, after King Milan of Serbia concluded a secret treaty with Austria, in which the Serbs promised Vienna to renounce their ambitions in Bosnia, in return for which Austria was to support Serbian ambitions to the south; that is, expansion to Salonica via Macedonia. Obviously Austria wanted to divert the Serbian lust for expansion from the Adriatic to the Aegean. This, however, meant a clash with Bulgaria. The result of this treaty was the war between Bulgaria and Serbia in 1885, when the Serbs were defeated at Slivnitsa. In 1897 Alexander Obrenovitch, King of Serbia, while on a visit to Sofia had suggested a division or partition of Macedonia, which then was still in Turkish possession. Under the influence of the Macedonians in Sofia, however, this proposal, which could have settled the feud between the two countries, was rejected. The Macedonians called it treason to their 'rightful aims.'



The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization was already in existence. To combat the terror of the Turkish authorities throughout Macedonia, Damian Grusheff and Peter Tosheff, with some others, had founded the I.M.R.O. in Ressen, Western Macedonia, in 1893. The new association was a secret society on the pattern of the Italian Carbonari organizations, and its avowed aim was complete political autonomy for Macedonia. In August, 1903, on Saint Elias's day, the I.M.R.O. organized the first revolt in Macedonia. After several weeks of heroic resistance, the Turkish troops succeeded in defeating the 'rebels.' But the attention of the world had been drawn to the Macedonian question.

The movement, however, which aimed at uniting the Macedonians in a liberating effort, soon split. The Bulgarian Government started a counter-movement which was under the leadership of Michailovsky and General Tonsheff, and the two Macedonian organizations now outlawed each other. When Michailovsky was followed by Woiwod Jan Sandansky, the young revolutionary, Todor Panizza, was sent to assassinate the leaders of the I.M.R.O., and Panizza killed Boris Sarafoff and Ivan Garvanoff, on December 10, 1907. From this date a continuous fratricidal feud existed between the I.M.R.O. and the so-called Federalist Movement.

In 1913, Macedonia was liberated from Turkish rule, but the Serbs begrudged the partition which had been foreseen in the Balkan Alliance Treaty of March 13, 1912; and in consequence of a new war Bulgaria lost all Macedonia, save a small strip in the southwest (the districts of Gorna-Djumaja, Melnik, and Nevrokop). We have already heard how Stambolisky promised to dissolve the I.M.R.O. and how this promise encompassed his death. After the *coup d'état* of June 9, 1923, the Macedonians were for many years the secret motive power behind all Bulgarian Governments. It was in May, 1924, that the old fratricidal feud was renewed. In the chapter, 'The Slav Spectre,' I have described how the treaty signed between the Macedonian organization and the Soviets brought about the feud that ended in the murder of Todor Alexandroff, in August, 1924, and later the murder of Peter Chauleff and General Protogeroff.

A few months later Todor Panizza, leader of the Federalists, himself felt the avenging hand of his opponents. During a performance of *Peer Gynt* in the Vienna Burgtheater, the Macedonian woman, Mencia Carniciu, fired several shots into his head and Panizza died.

on the spot. The new chief of the I.M.R.O., Vantche Michailoff, married the 'heroic' woman for her 'valorous' deed. Michailoff started an exterminating campaign against the followers of the murdered General Protogeroff who seemed to form the only resistance left to his movement. After a wholesale murder of Protogerovists, Michailoff succeeded in becoming the sole leader of the movement. But not for long.

It became more and more evident to the Bulgarian Governments that weak and disarmed Bulgaria must no longer arouse the wrath of powerful Yugoslavia, who felt challenged by the 'provocations' of the Macedonians. Already the last parliamentary Government of Muchanoff had effected measures against the Macedonians, especially after King Boris realized the necessity of a reconciliation with Yugoslavia if Bulgaria did not want to be forced into complete isolation in view of the growing power of the newly formed Balkan Entente. And when Lieutenant-Colonel Kimon Georgieff, in his *coup* of May, 1934, abolished the parliamentary régime, with energetic hand he dissolved the I.M.R.O. in fact, and not only on paper as his predecessors had done. Vantche Michailoff escaped to Turkey and has hardly been heard of since. The movement has rapidly disintegrated, and (almost a miracle) has ceased to play its former decisive and evil influence in Bulgarian politics.

During recent years Bulgarian politics have been ruled by three factors: first, the arduous efforts to deepen the friendship with Yugoslavia, which resulted in the treaty of perpetual friendship of January 24, 1937, between the two countries; the growing and disquieting influence of the Fascist-Nazi movement of Professor Alexandr Tzankoff and the increasing success of the King and Government in abolishing by slow but progressive methods the dictatorial régime in Bulgaria. Tzankoff is a queer and unstable personality. While he is the greatest opponent of Bolshevism, his brother Arsen is known as a Communist. Tzankoff's Nazi movement made rapid headway for a period; at the end of 1936 he had two Ministers in the second Kiosse-Ivanoff Cabinet, and it seemed that he would be entrusted with the premiership. But the King is against a Nazi experiment in Bulgaria, and while the Spanish civil war has caused the Government to hesitate in reintroducing the old democratic system, it is still hoped that Kiosse-Ivanoff, the Premier, who is a devoted servant of King Boris, will realize that the strongly democratic spirit of the Bulgarian population demands a return to parliamentary development.

## CHAPTER VII

### IT'S GREEK TO EVERYBODY

Two once familiar features of Athens have recently disappeared: the Temple of Nike Apteros (Wingless Victory) and parliamentary democracy. The features of that exquisite temple on the west end of the Acropolis are well known to every Anglo-Saxon lover of Greek art. Its frieze, or at least a large portion of it, is among the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum in London. The view from the terrace of this temple is unique. I count amongst the happiest days of my life those when I had the opportunity to sit there, year after year, on the terrace and gaze into the distance. The charms of this landscape, which, twenty-four centuries ago, delighted the hearts of the contemporaries of Pericles, always raises in pious remembrance those who created the marble miracles on the Acropolis.

For several years it had been noticed that the rocks were giving away beneath the Nike Temple which stood on a protruding cliff of the Acropolis. The experts decided that the temple would have to be pulled down to save it from destruction. Stone by stone the ancient building was taken to pieces; the blocks were carefully marked and numbered, and then stored away in a safer place while engineers and labourers reinforced the rocks with concrete. When the foundations have again been made safe, the temple will be reconstructed.

Between the temporary disappearance of this chaste temple and of turbulent Greek democracy, friends of Greece see a certain parallel. Parliamentarism, so these friends assert, has been removed only temporarily, and as soon as its foundations can be reinforced, the old edifice can be again reconstructed. '*Vederemo!*' (We shall see!) says the Italian. And when the huge red disk of the sun disappears behind the peaks of Salamis and throws reddish-golden rays on the ivory-coloured columns of the Parthenon, such magnificent peace seems to

rule over the 'violet-wreathed' city that the existence of a dictatorship in the country can hardly be believed.

While diplomatic and other foreign observers express the belief that the popularity of King George II and the firm hand of General Metaxas will convert the dictatorial experiment into a success, careful neutral students of Greek politics are of another opinion. In a country where every inhabitant is an individualist, and where the people for more than two thousand years have been wont to direct their own destiny, it is by no means an easy job to succeed with a dictatorial experiment. 'Five Greeks, five generals,' goes the old Venetian saying. On the other hand, the dictatorship is temporarily helped by the fact that the population has become tired of the many political intrigues, petty party feuds, changes of régime from monarchy into republic and vice versa, and the otherwise always agitated and debating Greek has become politically indifferent and apathetic.

Since 1912, the struggle between the Monarchists and the Republicans has played the dominating part in Greek politics. Victories and defeats shaped the fate of the country until the defeat of 1922-23 not only ended a ninety years' monarchist period, but brought about the greatest involuntary migration of peoples ever recorded in the pages of history. As a result of the victory of Mustapha Kemal Pasha over the armies of King Constantine of Greece, one million four hundred thousand Greeks had to leave the shores of Asia Minor and seek refuge in the mother country. The number of emigrants was more than one-fourth of the total population of Greece in 1922. No such destruction of an ancient civilization has ever before been recorded — one must consider that these Greeks had been on the Asiatic shores for over three thousand years. After all, the Trojan War occurred in the twelfth century before Christ! The Huguenot exiles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries numbered one-third of those involved in the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey; the number of Jews and Moors expelled from Spain in the days of Queen Isabella were not even one-tenth of it.

The settlement of these refugees was a gigantic task. With the exception of about two hundred thousand, who could save part of their fortunes, the bulk of the exiles were completely penniless. So hurried was their flight that many could not save even their personal belongings, carrying with them nothing but their ikons and sacred relics. The loans floated with the aid of the League of Nations in

1924 and 1928 yielded altogether a sum of fifteen million pounds sterling (in gold); in addition, Greece made really phenomenal sacrifices, granting six million pounds for the settlement of the refugees and paying (or promising to pay) twenty-four million pounds for the indemnification of those Bulgars and Turks who had been dispossessed to make room for the families from Asia Minor. To carry out the absorption of refugees in November, 1923, a commission was formed, which was headed by Henry Morgenthau, the American Ambassador in Turkey; and on his resignation in 1924 by another American, Charles P. Howland. Most of the refugees were townsmen — merchants, grocers, café owners, artisans, servants, or members of professions. Only a fraction of this group knew anything about agriculture; yet it was essential to settle most of them on the soil.

A considerable part of the business and professional men — they numbered about six hundred fifty thousand — were settled in towns. These were aided by the Government and the commission in one way only: they were given homes. Important refugee settlements, such as Byronia, Jonia, Cesarini, and Kokkinia, sprang into existence near Athens, some of them being towns of thirty thousand population; then Tumba and Kalamaria arose near Salonica, while other settlements were founded at Eleusis, Candia, and Edessa. Their coming caused economic crises in the towns when first they arrived, for the immigrants started as tailors, shoemakers, and shopkeepers, and soon the number of these enterprises exceeded the demand. But at the same time the refugees started industries which increased, not only the number of enterprises, but also the number of workers. The manufacture of cotton goods has greatly increased, and the refugees from Smyrna brought with them their carpet-weaving industry. Wine-making, milling, and oil refining have increased.

By far the greater number of the refugees, including the majority of the urban population in Asia Minor, about one hundred fifty thousand families altogether, were settled on the land given to them by the Greek Government. Most of this land had been confiscated from former Turkish owners in Macedonia. Two American engineering firms, the Foundation Company and Ulen and Company, both of New York, were entrusted with the reclamation work in the Axios (Wardar) and Struma Valleys. While the Government granted four hundred thousand acres of land, partly formerly tilled

and partly untilled, to the refugees, the reclaimed land amounted to over seven hundred thousand acres and with future settlements the total of the promised one million two hundred fifty thousand acres probably will be reached.

The difficulties of settling the refugees were complicated by the fact that they were by no means a homogeneous group. There were among them many, who, though Greek and Christian, spoke only Turkish. Furthermore, many were unfit by nature and training for agricultural work. About one-third of the settlers are doing well; more than a third are getting along with some help from the Refugee Commission, but the rest are doing less well and in some cases have abandoned their farms. It was a costly business, this settlement of the refugees: up to the beginning of the world economic crisis seventy million pounds in gold had been spent!

Those who remained, however, effected a revolution in Greek agriculture. The indigenous population was very conservative in its methods, prejudiced and superstitious. The newcomers readily accepted instruction in the most modern methods of cultivation. They introduced machinery, and the commission bought fifty-two motor-tractors with which any peasant might plough his land. The new settlers discarded the old method of letting the fields recover their richness by lying fallow, and in its place they introduced the rotation of crops. They also started new enterprises, such as production of tobacco, cotton, and fruit, and the breeding of silkworms.

The establishment of a million and a half refugees in a small country of then just over four million inhabitants must be considered as one of the greatest and noblest efforts in the long and distinguished history of Greece. The will of the Greeks to help their unfortunate fellow citizens in the hour of need and privation was such that a neutral witness could rightly exclaim: 'If the Greek nation should be reduced to the inhabitants of the island of Aegina, I should still be confident of its complete resuscitation.'

But, though the Greeks can show unity of purpose and determination in days of misfortune, their everyday politics, unfortunately, spell division and dissension. The reason for the catastrophe which, in turn, caused the emigration of these refugees, was the result of such a fundamental division in Greek politics. The ten years prior to the catastrophe had been dominated by the struggle for power and domination of two men, both of great abilities and strong will: King Constantine of Greece and Premier Eleutherios Venizelos.

King Constantine ascended his father's throne in March, 1913, after the Greek anarchist Alex Schinas had murdered King George I in Salonica. The victories achieved during the Balkan wars had assured the new King high prestige and popularity when he ascended the throne. But hardly had the ripples caused by the Balkan Wars begun to settle when the outbreak of the Great War brought Greece into a difficult situation. A treaty concluded with Serbia should have brought Greece to the side of the Allies automatically; but the apparent military superiority of the Central Powers caused King Constantine to remain neutral. Moreover, sentimental ties connected him closely with Germany. His military education was German, and his wife, Queen Sophie, was the sister of Kaiser Wilhelm! On the other hand, his temperamental Premier, the Cretan-born Eleutherios Venizelos, from the beginning advocated Greece's participation in the war on the side of the Allies. The story of Greece's part in the war is well known: it is still remembered how Venizelos established his régime in Salonica and how in the summer of 1917 Constantine was forced to leave Greece. His son, Alexander, followed him on the throne; but the real master was the Candian statesman.

The Allied victory brought great territorial compensations to Greece. Early in May, 1919, however, the representatives of Great Britain, the United States of America, and France invited Venizelos to occupy Smyrna, and in June, 1920, the Greek offensive in Asia Minor started. In October, King Alexander died as a result of a monkey-bite and a plebiscite which was held went in favour of the Royalists. King Constantine, who had returned to Greece, took over the leadership of the army and Venizelos left the country. The Greek offensive, which in the beginning was successful, met with disaster after Mustapha Kemal Pasha reorganized the Turkish army. By August, 1923, Smyrna had fallen and on September 30 King Constantine with the Crown Prince, Prince George (now King George II), had to leave the country.

The army took over the rule; and, after the execution of the Royalist Ministers, a Republican régime was established in 1924, with the gentle and idealistic Alexander Papanastasiou as its first Premier. But the premiers and dictators of this troubled period were merely puppets. In the background loomed the dominating shadow of Venizelos, who, though still abroad, was the spiritual father of



the Republic and certainly the most important man in Greece. After the ravages of the Turkish war and internal strife, it became necessary to recall him from exile to rebuild the country. Though he was sixty-four years of age and of delicate health when he once more became Premier of Greece, he worked sixteen hours a day.

This arduous work produced fruits. Venizelos's policy before the war had resulted in gaining for Greece the valuable territories of Epirus, Thessaly, Crete, and the smaller islands of Lemnos, Lesbos, Chios, and Samos, while after the war his policy assured Western Thrace to Greece.

When I visited him in the summer of 1931, he was still living in rooms at the Hôtel Petit Palais. In an earlier conversation he had foreshadowed his plans for the creation of a Balkan Federation. This time he developed the subject further:

'A real European co-operation is possible only if it is preceded by the co-operation of smaller groups. For this reason there is much interest in Greece for the promotion of co-operation between the Balkan States, because a Balkan Federation would be one step toward a comprehensive European union. There was a conference of the Balkan States in Athens, presided over by Monsieur Papanastasiou. The Greek representation at this conference was not official, but I may say that the Government watched its proceedings with great sympathy.'

During the conversation I mentioned that his new press law had been described as reactionary by the opposition politicians. The Premier declared to me that he had no desire to restrict the political freedom of the press. 'They may call me what they like,' he said in his agitated manner, seizing the lapel of my coat and continuing to tug at it during the rest of the conversation. 'They can call me by any name, and I shall not mind. But if anyone should write that I had stolen money or been guilty of corruption, I should defend myself and demand satisfaction. If they could prove their allegations, well and good, but if not, I should want compensation. I have modelled my new press bill entirely on the British pattern. When I said in Parliament that I was only following the British example, one deputy exclaimed: "Oh, but Great Britain is a reactionary country." My reply,' the Premier said, laughing heartily, 'was, "I don't mind being reactionary if I am no more reactionary than Great Britain."' This utterance characterizes the great Greek statesman exactly.

He was passionate, temperamental, and impetuous, and capable of hatred such as only Greeks know. But above all he was a great patriot. He was doing his best to try to reconstruct his badly tormented country when suddenly the world economic crisis put a bar across his advance. Greece was more vulnerable to the effects of this crisis than were her neighbours because, while the others produce ordinary cereals, Greece's products are mostly 'luxuries,' such as first-class tobacco, raisins and currants, wine and figs, olives and hazel nuts. Moreover, shipping, which was one of the prime industries of Greece, was laid idle both by the world crisis and by competition as well as by the restrictions on shipping imposed by the neighbouring countries.

Economic reverses caused the Royalists to attain a slight majority in the elections of 1933. Tsaldaris, a shrewd lawyer, took over the premiership, while Venizelos watched with uneasiness as his followers were progressively ousted, not only from the Government offices, but also from the army. The Royalist-Republican cleavage became so wide that in March, 1936, it brought an explosion. Military and naval revolts broke out in Salonica, Athens, and the Piraeus; and Venizelos, who had retired to his home in Crete, could no longer idly watch the course of events; he accepted the leadership of the Revolution. His former Republican-Revolutionary comrade, General Kondylis, however, playing the rôle of a George Monk, allied himself with the Royalists and defeated the revolt. Venizelos fled first to an Italian island and then in exile to France, where he died a few months later. Venizelos's first appearance in Greek history was when he participated as a kind of *comitadji* in the liberation revolt of Crete at the end of the last century; and in a revolt in Crete he finished his career. The real beginning of his political career was of militant nature: it was the march of the 'Army League' from the Goudi Barracks in 1909 which introduced Venizelos into Greek politics.

He lived to see the restoration of the royal house which he hated, but at the end of a busy life the old Cretan was finding his way back to royalism, and was already willing to support the cause of the Crown when a sudden attack of influenza finished his eventful career.

His former friend and his opponent in 1935, General Kondylis, then arranged a fake plebiscite which helped the restoration of the

Monarchy; and in November, 1935, King George II landed in the country which he had been compelled to quit with his father in 1923. Kondylis, however, was 'graciously' dismissed from service after the King's return, and the steady Professor Demertzis was asked to form a Cabinet. New elections brought a draw: so even was the number of seats between Venizelists and Royalists that only the fifteen Communist deputies could keep the balance. They formed a kind of popular front with the Liberal Venizelists. When General Metaxas was appointed Premier, it was obvious that the days of parliamentary life in Greece were numbered. The General, with his Potsdam education, disliked the Liberals and even more the Communists; and he awaited only the first opportunity to dispose of both. The Royalists hated him because they claimed that their work in difficult days paved the way for restoration and now they should enjoy the benefits of it. But the announcement of a general strike in Salonica in August, 1936, brought the long-awaited chance for the ambitious general. He suppressed the Parliament and established his dictatorship.

Greece is a strange country. Kronos, who devoured his own children, dwelt there; and Greece imitates the example of Kronos. Three of her great figures, King Constantine, Trikoupis, the great statesman of the eighties, and Venizelos, all died in exile. During the last twenty years Greece has witnessed a continuous coming and going of kings — going into exile and then coming home to rule! She has experienced four dictatorships and half a dozen revolts in a decade and a half. Will the next decade bring her more peace and stability?

## CHAPTER VIII

### FROM MUSTAPHA KEMAL TO ATATURK

'Don't judge Turkey,' a young Turkish friend said to me, 'by trying to make comparisons with capitals in Western Europe. Don't judge Turkey by its surviving faults — the bad cobblestones or the dirt in some places. Thirteen years ago we had to take over the derelict wreck of a ramshackle empire. You knew the Turkey of those days; remember what she was then, and the great progress we have made will strike you.'

My young friend was right: this is the only point of view from which the new Turkey must be judged. The progress made during the last thirteen or fourteen years is astonishing. Into a people and State which had no national consciousness, Kamal Ataturk infused a feeling of patriotism; it is no longer Islam for which the Turk is ready to sacrifice his life, but Turkey. Out of lazy *hamals* (porters) and backward agricultural cultivators he has made a busy nation — as busy as the Southern sun permits; in a land where the machine was almost unknown, he has started new industries. Whether this policy of industrializing his country will ultimately prove to be a beneficial one remains to be seen; but Kamal Ataturk is not alone in his ambitions — he was simply attracted by the ideal of self-sufficiency which had infected other countries as well.

For the foreign visitor Istanbul still has a fascination equalled by that of only a few towns in the world. She remains as dreamy and romantic as when her name was still Constantinople. No visitor can fail to admire the skyline of Stamboul with its crescent-crowned domes and vigilant minarets, and the noisy and thronging crowds in the impossibly narrow streets of Galata or of the Egyptian bazaar are bound to captivate the imagination. The quaint call of the muezzin from the garret of the slender minaret, after the red-disked sun has disappeared behind the steel-grey waves of the Sea of Marmara, still attracts the fancy of the tourist.

But the modern Turk, who desires his country to be brought into line with the civilization of other more developed countries of Europe or America, is disappointed when the stranger is charmed by the beauty of Istanbul. The new Turk lives and strives for the creation of a modern, thriving industrialized Turkey. The romantic side of Stamboul, as described by Pierre Loti, is regarded by these new Turks as only cheap trash — reminiscences of an Empire that exists no more. 'Is the East End of London the real England, or do you consider the East Side of New York to be the real America?' my young Turkish friend asked angrily. 'Yet what you admire here and what you call romantic is just as little the real Turkey as the East End is the real London.'

It would be a waste of time to attempt to argue with these younger Turks. Yet it is possible both to admire the romance of Constantinople and to recognize the great achievements of Kamal Ataturk, the President of the Turkish Republic, who undoubtedly, almost single-handed, is responsible for the Turkish renaissance.

It is true that Mustapha Kemal Pasha introduced his own despotism in the place of that of the Sultans. But great ideological differences separate the two despotisms. The tyranny of the Sultan was exercised only in the narrow interests of the Osmanli dynasty and of the huge empire of the Sultans in which Arabs and Armenians, Greeks and other Levantines lived and strove next to the Turks. Kemal Pasha's despotism is operated in the interest of his own people; the Turkish nation. He abolished a régime which shed the blood of the Anatolian peasant on faraway battlefields in Syria and Palestine, in the Caucasus and Iraq. In the future the Turkish agricultural cultivator is to defend only the soil of sacred Turkish land!

Mustapha Kemal abolished the thousand years' rule of the Turkish Sultans and introduced the modern republican State form; he intended, and still intends, to Westernize a nation which for centuries was retrogressive, obsolete, and super-traditional. In a country where only ten per cent of the population could read or write, he dared to disestablish the Moslem religion from the State, to abolish the Caliphate, and to try to extricate the illiterate peasants from the influence of reactionary Hodzas and Imams and Dervishes. No major country went through such a sweeping change within a decade as did Turkey. Everybody prophesied the failure of the experiment; but the strong hand of the drunken, quarrelsome Turkish general

succeeded in leading the State through its most critical stages; and he controls his nation of eighteen millions with a strongly entrenched and established rule.

In many respects the achievements of Mustapha Kemal are far superior to those of Hitler or Mussolini or of the other smaller dictator stars, and perhaps figure next to those of Lenin. He took over the régime in Turkey in days when the collapse was complete; when the Turkish army was rapidly dissolving and was being disarmed by the Allied Entente Control Commissions; when British, French, Italian, and Greek troops were occupying the capital of the country and other important vantage-points; when a British high commissioner was dictating terms of defeat to a broken and nervous Sultan; when various Powers were contemplating carving up the Turkish Empire and dismembering even Anatolia. Mustapha Kemal's resistance was launched in days as difficult as it is possible to imagine. When Hitler came to power, almost all the defamatory clauses of the Versailles Treaty had been abolished, or were on the way to being abolished. In reality, without Hitler Germany could have obtained more far-reaching concessions by peaceful methods than she has done under Hitler's domineering rule. Likewise Mussolini came to power in a country which counted amongst the victors, even if the Italians did feel themselves to have been 'cheated' at the green table of Versailles. All students of Italian politics of those days know that the Bolshevik 'danger,' the bogey which brought the Fascists to power, was no longer a real menace in October, 1922.

Like his 'comrades,' Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin, the dictator of new Turkey originated in the lower strata of the population; but he differs from them in that he had a military education and a fine record as an officer before he rose to political power. In this he resembles Napoleon more than the modern types of dictators.

Mustapha Kemal's parents were poor people. His father, Ali Risa, was a minor clerk of the Ottoman Debt Service in Salonica (rather like Hitler's father, who was a small official of the Austrian customs service). His mother, Subeida, was the daughter of a small tenant of a farm in Southern Albania. According to such reliable evidence as I was able to collect, this blonde-haired, blue-eyed, robust woman was an Albanian whose mother, in turn, was a Macedonian. Mustapha Kemal, with his blue eyes and blond hair, resembled his mother's family, who must have been of Thraco-Illyrian origin — the

same blood that flowed in the veins of Alexander the Great, of Mehemet Ali of Egypt, and of the ablest Grand-Viziers of Turkish history.<sup>1</sup>

They lived in great poverty in a dirty, dark street of the Turkish quarters of Salonica. Ali Risa wished to make a merchant of his son; Subeida was more ambitious and wanted to educate him to be a priest, which in the eyes of a peasant woman is the most noble profession and the highest rank to which a peasant can rise. But in the school of the Turkish mosque the wild and unruly youngster could not find his place. After his father's death, an uncle sent him to the military cadet school in Salonica; and when he had completed this school, he was sent to the officers' school at Monastir. Already in these early days he was participating in conspiratory activities against the Sultan's régime. These revolutionary activities increased when he became a lieutenant and took over the organization of the revolutionary society Watan. He was arrested, but later on pardoned, and sent to Damascus in Syria. As an unruly young officer, with the help of a higher officer, he suddenly returned clandestinely to Constantinople, but was recognized. He managed to get back to Syria, however, whence he was sent to the Ghasa front to fight against the unruly Druses. But he wished to be transferred to the Third Army in Salonica where revolutionary activities were probably the most vigorous. He soon distrusted the leaders of the movement 'Unity and Progress,' of whom Enver Pasha was the most important. Nevertheless, the revolt of the Young Turks in 1908 was crowned with success, and Sultan Abdul-Hamid II was imprisoned.

The following ten years of Mustapha Kemal's life were dominated by the struggle against Enver Pasha, the only other really energetic figure in the Turkish army. Already in these early days of his career Mustapha Kemal wished to become a leading personality in the country — he wanted a commanding position: War Minister, or even Grand Vizier!

But in spite of the success of the Revolution, Mustapha Kemal benefited little from the change; the real power went into the hands of his hated rivals, Enver Bey, Taalat Pasha, and Djemal. At thirty years of age, he was the Chief-of-Staff of the Third Army in Salonica,

<sup>1</sup>Turkish historians claim that Mustapha Kemal's father was a higher official in the Customs Service, and that all his grandparents were of Turkish blood. This, however, is highly questionable.

but his political influence was nil, while the will of his rival prevailed over the country.

The success of Enver was obvious: this young and good-looking officer was not only highly talented, but he possessed temperament, good manners, and a commanding personality. Mustapha Kemal was very different. While his talents were recognized by all his superiors, his undisciplined manners, his quarrelsome nature, his constant criticism of everybody and everything (a criticism always mingled with bitterness, gall, and sarcasm), alienated from him even those who wished to be of service to him. After the war against the Italians in Tripoli (where he again met Enver), the Balkan War broke out, but Mustapha Kemal was with difficulty able to return home, and could participate only in the Second Balkan War.

After that war a new conflict arose with Enver. This able officer wished to reorganize the Turkish army, and, believing in the great military abilities of the Germans, accepted the services of the German General, Liman von Sanders. Mustapha Kemal opposed this appointment. His quarrelsome nature got on the nerves of Enver and he was sent, as Military Attaché, to Sofia, where he was in 1914.

The Great War gave the first opportunity for Mustapha Kemal to show his extraordinary abilities. He was sent to Gallipoli, where his immediate superior was Liman von Sanders, whose appointment he had so hotly resented. Though they often quarrelled in the Dardanelles, the two men had respect for each other's military abilities. Liman probably found something Prussian in the rude manners of Mustapha Kemal and forgave him his very highly strung temperament. But at the landing of Gaba Tepe, and later in August in the fights at Sari Bair, his energy and military foresight undoubtedly greatly helped to achieve the Turkish victory over the British troops. By December, 1915, the British had withdrawn their troops from the Dardanelles.

When Mustapha Kemal returned to Constantinople, Enver Pasha again wished to get rid of him and sent him to the Caucasus. When in 1917 the Russian front collapsed, he reconquered the Armenian territories (which had been occupied by the Russians), and after that he was sent to the Syrian front against the troops of the British General Allenby. The Turks, however, had to evacuate Palestine and Syria, and Mustapha Kemal could offer resistance only at Alexandretta (the Mediterranean port which has become of late an apple



of discord between Turkey and France). Previously, however, he had another quarrel with Enver, and he had to go for a long holiday to Vienna.

At this time, Kemal — who had been promoted to Major-General in 1916 and obtained with his new rank the title Pasha — was suffering from kidney trouble. Warned by a famous Vienna specialist that he must give up drinking, reduce his smoking, and live a quiet and moderate life or die within two years, Kemal obeyed none of these instructions — and twenty years have since passed!

Before the Syrian warfare he went also with the Crown Prince Wahideddin to Germany where he 'excelled' in telling the most disagreeable things to both Hindenburg and Ludendorff. He hated the German tutelage over Turkey. Was this only the natural impulsive reaction of the Turkish Nationalist against foreign intervention, or was his hatred of Germany prompted by the fact that Enver was the spokesman of the German orientation in Turkey? Mustapha Kemal, in any case, advised Wahideddin to make a separate peace with the Allies; but when the Crown Prince became the Sultan, under the name Mehmed VI, he continued to be under the thumb of the pro-German Enver.

The collapse of the Turkish front and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire then enabled Kemal to step into the forefront. To get rid of a dangerous intriguer, the Sultan sent him to Anatolia. Though he was on the British black-list, he was finally permitted to go. But the British once more suspected him, and an order was issued to prevent his landing. Had Mustapha Kemal failed to reach Anatolian soil, history in the Near East probably would have taken another turn. But on May 19, 1919, he landed in Samsun, as Inspector-General of the Northern Army; and immediately he started his intrigues and conspiracies for the liberation of Turkey from foreign domination.

The Sultan was, so to say, a prisoner of the British, who were supplying the main occupation force in Constantinople and Thrace. A fanatic struggle began. Mustapha Kemal called together the National Assembly in Siwas, and after many intrigues, with the help of the various army leaders he managed to make himself President of Parliament; and when the British imprisoned and interned the leading deputies of the Parliament which had assembled in Constantinople, Mustapha Kemal called his National Assembly to Angora.

The choice of Angora as a capital city was his. Here ended the railway from Haidar Pasha at that time, thus making Angora the farthest eastern town reachable by rail from the western parts of Anatolia. Moreover, he had discovered the abandoned house of an Armenian, only a few miles from the old city, and this villa had glass windows and some Western comforts.

It was against this revolt of the Turkish Nationalists that, as we have seen, the Allies (with the exception of Italy, which was temporarily absent from the Peace Conference) invited Venizelos to land troops in Smyrna. The Greeks attacked and drove back the Turks to the Sakkaria River, though in January, 1921, Mustapha Kemal's right hand, Ismet Pasha, had succeeded in defeating the Greeks at Inoenue. In August, 1921, Kemal was made chief commander of the army; and soon after that, on August 14, the great battle on the Sakkaria was fought which ended in the defeat of the Greek army. Three weeks later Smyrna was reoccupied, and the Greeks began leaving the country in hurried and disorderly flight. On September 1, Mustapha Kemal had given out his famous army order: 'Soldiers, forward! Direction: the Mediterranean.'

During the battle at Smyrna, Mustapha Kemal made the acquaintance of Hanum Latifé, his future wife. While Smyrna was burning, a young lady, the daughter of a shipowner, came to him and offered her parents' spacious villa to the Commander-in-Chief. Mustapha Kemal accepted the offer, and, in January, 1923, married the charming but somewhat headstrong daughter of his absentee landlord. The marriage, however, was not a happy one: Mustapha Kemal was not born to be a husband. His wild habits and restless nature soon alienated him from Latifé Hanum. In August, 1925, he signed the divorce decree.

Days and weeks and months and years of difficult trials and probations followed the victory over the Greeks. A thankful National Assembly bestowed upon him the proud title Ghazi: victor over the unbelievers! On October 29, 1923, he converted Turkey into a Republic and became its first President. Five months later, the Caliphate was also abolished. In the face of a proud, conservative, nay, retrogressive, people he had to push every reform with dogged determination and bitter persistence. But luck was on his side. At the Lausanne Peace Conference his delegate, Ismet Pasha, succeeded in obtaining the best possible terms for his country; at home he was

consolidating his power. The methods he used were high-handed and brutal. The secret police, which he had taken over from the Sultans, was spying everywhere. Special tribunals were established to make short shrift of the 'enemies' of the nation; that is, the Ghazi's opponents. His former allies against Enver, such as Rauf, Kiasim Kara Bekir, Ali Fuad, and Refet, were all tried (most of them had escaped in good time). Colonel Arif, his best friend for many years, was sentenced to death and executed. Wherever the spirit of revolt was detected, the tribunals proclaimed 'counter-revolutionary' death sentences by the dozens.

One party, and one only — his own People's Party — was now permitted to exist in the country, though the Parliament was still maintained. A short experiment in creating a second Republican-Liberal Party, as a formal opposition under the leadership of Fethi, failed. The one-party system continues to prevail, therefore, in Turkey. After thus establishing his firm rule in the country by blood and iron, he could proceed to this day to more far-reaching reforms. The fez, which he regarded as a symbol of retrogression and reaction, was abolished, though the law was passed only after its use was steadily decreasing. He introduced German commercial law, Italian criminal law, and the Swiss civil code instead of the obsolete Turkish rules. The metric system, which had been introduced already in 1917, was now given general validity in the country, while the Gregorian calendar supplanted the old Turkish system of counting the years and months.

By 1927 the consolidation under his terroristic rule had proceeded so far that the exceptional tribunals could be abolished. In 1928 he made another far-reaching reform: instead of the old Arabic script he introduced the Latin A B C. The language has been purified of Arabic and Persian words — highly revolutionary proceedings in a country where fatalism and superstition have been for centuries the guiding ideas of the population. His efforts to reduce illiteracy are laudable: he himself travels round the country and teaches the population the rudiments of the alphabet. I can remember that in the first years the Latin alphabet caused confusion to many; but when I was recently in Turkey I noticed that most of the people could now easily read, and even write, the new script. When the old Ministry of Justice, a wooden building near the Aja Sofia, still existed, scores of scribes were seated under the plantain trees in front

of the Ministry. They were equipped with typewriters, already fitted out with the new letters, and the peasants, who had to make a petition to the Ministry and who could not write, came to these scribes and dictated their pleas into the machines.

Episodes, such as the revolt of the Dervishes at Menemen or the two big Kurdish risings, were put down by the most brutal terror. Meanwhile, the industrialization of the country was carried through with much energy and considerable success. Textile mills in Kayseri and Malatya, ironworks in Zonguldak, silk factories in Bursa, glass factories on the Bosphorus, have sprung into existence, and with the help of the Sumer Bank, or other new Turkish banks, these industries are being developed. Nevertheless, Turkey does not want to make the mistakes of the major dictators who try to achieve self-sufficiency: she wants to exploit the mineral and other natural wealth of the country in some home industries, but still leave ample room for foreign purchases. Through this industrial boom Turkey has become one of those rare countries where there is no unemployment.

Two years ago, during a campaign for 'Turkicizing' names of families and places, Angora was changed to Ankara, and the President of the Republic threw away his Arabic first name Mustapha, while Kemal he changed into the Turkish Kamal (fortress). The nation then bestowed on him the name-title of Ataturk (Father of the Turks). The Premier, Ismet Pasha (the titles of Pasha and Bey having been abolished) became Ismet Inoenue, so named after the famous victory over the Greeks, and the Foreign Minister, Tevfik Rueshdue Bey, became Rushdi Aras. The friendship of Ataturk and Rushdu Aras goes back to the days when both were in Salonica — Kemal as officer and Tevfik Rueshdue as the municipal doctor who supervised the hygiene of certain localities which officers patronized.

In his private life Kamal Ataturk has remained the same unbounded and irresponsible man he was in his youth in Salonica. Despite his kidney troubles, which at times cause him endless pains, he likes to drink, and to drink excessively. He is a chain-smoker, and a most irregular person in his private ways. When I was in Istanbul last year he was spending the summer in Floria, a seaside resort near San Stefano. There he has built a villa which rests on piles driven into the sea. The history of the discovery of Floria is also typical of him.

One day he went to stay in Floria, where he slept in a local inn. He took such a liking to the fine seaside that he decided to rent the place. He asked the man how much profit he was making in a season, and then paid him a much larger sum than that. But on second thought, he did not use the inn: he decided to build a sort of fairy castle rising over the waves of the Sea of Marmara.

From Floria he made frequent excursions into Istanbul, but mostly at night-time. For hours before such trips the secret police were effecting precautionary measures, after which the President's motor-car sped through the Grande Rue de Pera to the Park Hotel, a magnificent new building on the top of the Taksim. From the garden terrace there is a most exquisite view of the Bosphorus. If his arrival happened to be after closing time, the waiters had to be dragged from their sleep and the music hurriedly called together. Before closing time his arrival was equally painful because any guest who was in the restaurant was compelled to stay until the Ghazi left, which was often at six and seven o'clock in the morning. In his boundless conceit, he often summoned to his table ladies who were present. Some, of course, were flattered; others indignant.

His impulsiveness almost created a major incident at one of the balls at which he was present. While dancing with the wife of an ambassador, he suddenly kissed her. The *sang-froid* and quick-wittedness of the ambassador, who was of Latin blood, saved the situation: 'Ladies and gentlemen,' he shouted, 'now everybody kisses his partner.'

On the other hand, it is amazing how Kamal can control his brains (if not his nerves). After a heavy, riotous night, during which he had been drinking excessively, he started to discuss philosophical themes with the ambassador of a Great Power, and the diplomat was amazed by his razor-sharp distinctions. His vitality is amazing. In Floria last summer he would drink until the early morning hours, then go for a fast swim or drive his motor-boat through the battling waves, then return to his desk and work for hours. He ate little, and when tired took only a few hours' sleep. After this 'nap' again a swim, again work, then more drinks . . .

Whatever his private life may be, it is certain that Kamal Atatürk has made a great country of the miserable ruins of the Osmanli Empire. He is by no means beloved, he has no traits which would bring about a feeling of compassion or sympathy for him, but he is feared.

and esteemed. Turkey is one great prison, of this there is no doubt. But in his defence one must say that it was a much worse jail in the days when Abdul Hamids and Mehmeds ruled over a Sultanate's realm. This, of course, is but little consolation for those who still have to speculate about the value of opposition in the vermin-infested Turkish political prisons. But Kamal's good-will to make Turkey a great nation and his success in creating esteem and admiration abroad for his country's strength cannot be denied. He is a realist, and yet a dreamer. He wants to make of the Turkish pariah a self-conscious Turkish patriot, in a country where patriotism has never existed. He wants to create Western industries in a country whose population does not even know how to cultivate properly the fertile soil of Anatolia. As long as his great energy is abroad and felt everywhere, fear and intimidation put some backbone into these unfortunate proletarians, and the experiment seems to be at least half successful.

It is, of course, too much to expect that everybody should fall in line with the new life. The old Turk still believes that Allah, and only Allah, guides his steps, and is fatalistic as were his parents and other ancestors. If you meet an old Turk and he sizes you up as no spy of the régime, he will make his notes in Arab script and not in the Latin alphabet. And how often it happens that the European-clad elderly Turk in the even hours suddenly begs to be excused for a while, and goes into the next room to pull out a prayer-carpet from a secret drawer and, turning toward Mecca, performs his evening prayer. Human nature is stronger than the will of the firmest dictator. On the other hand, it is obvious that nobody can completely change the mentality of a country overnight. As long as Kamal Atatürk's firm hand rules over the badly cowed Turkish nation, the remaining spineless crowd will obey and will submit at least *pro forma*.

The youth — and this is the same in all dictatorial countries — is his. Turkish Nationalism and the materialistic interpretation of life appeal to the younger generation. Should Kamal Atatürk have a long life, then Turkey's problem is solved. One more generation, and the vices and weaknesses of life under the Sultans and Caliphs will have been forgotten. And probably then he can give more freedom to his people. Five years ago he said: 'For the time being the people should not bother about politics, but should go after work

and trade. If I have a chance to rule ten or fifteen years more, then I can permit them to speak their opinions openly.' He is certainly wrong not to permit more criticism now. But his nature does not tolerate either criticism or contradiction.

But what if he does not live ten years longer? This would be a serious blow to Turkey. There is no statesman to take his place, except Ismet Inoenue, who, however, is much older than Ataturk. If Ataturk goes, then Turkey can easily head toward disintegration. His example shows that the best dictatorship is not worth as much as a bad democracy, because it lacks the most important requisite for a nation: successive progression. Bismarck created in an unpolitical Germany a system which was excellent as long as the old Iron Chancellor lived. His death brought untalented epigons who could not master the heritage bequeathed by the great statesman. Germany's present troubles root in this mistake of Bismarck: he counted without his Germans. And the system of Ataturk contains exactly the same hereditary vice.

## CHAPTER IX

### RUMANIA

'RUMANIA!' cried Nicholas II, Tsar of all the Russias. 'Don't mention that country to me! It is neither a state nor a nation, but a profession!'

The Tsar's anger had been provoked by a little drama which occurred in the spring of 1914. Dowager Queen Marie — then Crown Princess of Rumania — apparently planned that her eldest son Carol should marry Princess Olga, eldest daughter of the Tsar. To facilitate her plan, a meeting of the two families was arranged on the Tsar's yacht in the Black Sea. But Carol, the impetuous, started instead to court the more temperamental second daughter of the Tsar, Princess Tatiana. This breach of etiquette was considered so outrageous by the ruler of Russia that he broke off the meeting and voiced his rage to Sazonoff.

Needless to say, the Tsar was unjust. Nevertheless, many other people have held similar opinions about Rumania, though the majority of those who know the country hold a different opinion. That such opinions, however, could come into existence is probably due to a great extent to definite peculiarities of the Rumanian race and nation, especially of those Rumanians who make up the Old Kingdom. The Rumanian is a racial mixture into whose veins all kinds of peoples who migrated from the Russian plains toward Western Europe in the fourth and fifth and sixth centuries of our era have infiltrated their blood.

The Rumanians were subjected to more than five centuries of oppression by the Turks, and, when they obtained a certain amount of autonomy, Phanariot Greek governors, sent from Constantinople to rule the country, exploited the Rumanians in the most ignoble way. Many of the leading families in Rumania are descendants of these Phanariots; for instance, the Cantacuzenes, the Ypsilantis, and



the Mavrocordatos. These Phanariot *hospodars* had to pay a high tribute to the Sultans; and to be able to rake together this contribution as well as to assure their own profits they placed on the Rumanian peasantry such heavy taxation that a large part of them emigrated farther west across the mountains to Transylvania.

The Transylvanian Rumanians are apparently a purer race than their brethren in the south and in the east; and they are probably not so clever as the average Rumanian whose wits could not but be sharpened by many centuries of slavery. On the other hand, the Transylvanian Rumanian possesses a higher degree of culture and civilization than his brethren in the *Regat* (Kingdom, meaning the old Rumanian parts). The civilizing influence of the Transylvanian element since the Great War has been enormous, and when in 1928 the Transylvanian National Peasant Party leader, Julius Maniu, formed his Government, it seemed that a new era of greater democracy and the abolition of corrupt practices was about to dawn. But when Maniu quarrelled with King Carol and his party was dismissed to make room for the Liberal Party's return to power, these hopes were dimmed if not eclipsed.

The origin of the Rumanian people, both on this and the other side of the Carpathians, is enveloped in mystery. The Rumanians themselves like to believe that they are descended from the Getae and the Dacians, who intermarried with the Romans whom Trajan settled there after his conquest of Dacia. Though their territory was thereafter occupied by Goths, Gepidae, Huns, Magyars, Petchenegs, and Avars, as well as Slavs, they maintain that the Daco-Roman population stayed in Rumania even when these conquering hordes temporarily subjugated it.

That the Rumanians are connected with the original Roman settlers is shown by many facts. The survival of the Trajan Saga, the celebration of certain Latin festivals, survival of old Roman superstitions, such as the *striga* (witch), or the semi-pagan cult of Sfanta Miercure and Sfanta Vinere (Saint Mercury and Saint Venus), indicate Latin origin, while the average Rumanian hut or house reminds one in form of the ancient Thracian domicile. On the other hand, more than half of the words of the language (which by its type is Latin) are of Slav or other origin.

The Magyars declare that the Rumanians are of a Slav and Asiatic mixture, and cannot be traced as having inhabited Transylvania

(which was till 1918 part of the Kingdom of Hungary) before the thirteenth century. They maintain that the original inhabitants of Transylvania were a tribe allied to the Magyars, and descended from the Hun followers of Attila's youngest son, Csaba. They say that the Phanariot 'wolves' forced the Rumanians to emigrate to Transylvania, where they were welcomed by the Hungarians, who had suffered great losses in their wars against the Turks. These guests, they declare, then conquered the land which the Hungarians had possessed for a thousand years.

These somewhat remote historical discussions are nevertheless of great importance in daily politics, for Hungarian revisionists on the one side and Rumanian anti-revisionists on the other exploit them to support their claims. The truth probably lies between the two schools—that is, part of the Daco-Roman element did survive, but it mixed naturally with the conquering nations.

Whatever the origin of the Rumanians in Transylvania, they certainly developed during the centuries into the largest stratum of the population of that province and followed a policy which aimed at union with the mother country, Rumania. This dream was fulfilled after the Great War, and Greater Rumania was born by uniting all the largest groups of Rumanians living in one group, thus consisting, besides Rumania proper, of Transylvania, Bukowina (formerly Austrian), and Bessarabia (which had been in Tsarist Russian possession since 1812). While immediately after the union the Transylvanian Rumanians played an important part in shaping the fate of the country, and while for four months after the proclamation of the union the Transylvanian leader, Doctor Alexander Vajda-Woewod, was Prime Minister, with the passing of the enthusiasm of the first months the Liberal Party of Rumania, which for some decades had shaped the fate of the country, again obtained power and pushed back the influence of those from across the mountains.

The leader of this Liberal Party was Jonel Bratianu. The history of modern Rumania, since her liberation from the Turkish yoke, was closely connected with the activities of the Bratianu 'dynasty,' which for the last fifty years, with short interruptions, was master of this prosperous and rich country.

Jon Bratianu, father of Jonel, started his career as a revolutionary. In this regard he could be compared with Pasitch, who became a

conservative after a tormented revolutionary youth. Educated in Paris, Bratianu came into contact with the revolutionary movement there, and then led the Revolutionary Nationalist Party at home. He had to take flight and lived in exile until 1857. After his return, he agitated for a union of the two Rumanian provinces, Moldavia and Wallachia, under the leadership of Prince Cuza. But only when the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen dynasty was asked to take the throne in 1866 did the lights of the Bratianu family begin really to burn brightly. First, however, there were serious clashes between ruler and Premier. Bratianu was following a progressive policy, and his first Cabinet in 1867 lasted only one year because of the opposition of the rich *boyars* (landowners). After the defeat of his financial reform bills, he engineered two *coups d'état* against the dynasty, one in Ploesti in August, 1870, and one in Bucharest in March, 1871. The Government forces, however, suppressed the risings. It was only in 1876 that Jon Bratianu revised his policy and again became Premier. It was Bratianu's influence, which brought Rumania into the Turkish-Russian War in 1877, that resulted in Rumania's complete independence from Turkish sovereignty. And Bratianu's policy succeeded in persuading the Powers to permit the raising of the principality into a kingdom. It was under his régime that railways were built and a stable budget established. From the end of the seventies of the past century he worked in close co-operation with Carol I. His son Jonel (born 1864) took over the heritage of his father.

Jonel could show a record of twenty years as Minister and twelve years as Premier. He served King Carol I until that ruler's death; and in 1914, when the nephew of the late King, Prince Ferdinand, took over the rule, Bratianu continued his service to the dynasty under this new régime. But while he maintained the best possible relations with King Ferdinand I and his wife, Queen Marie, Jonel Bratianu's contact with Crown Prince Carol, the present King, did not develop under happy circumstances. It is, of course, not unusual that a Premier, who enjoys the trust and esteem of an old ruler, cannot agree with the young claimant to the throne. One need only remember the disagreement and later conflict of Kaiser Wilhelm II, even as Crown Prince, with Bismarck, and of the Prince of Wales — later on King Edward VIII — with Premier Baldwin. Bratianu viewed with misgiving not only the love affair of the young Prince

with the Titian-haired Jewess Magda Lupescu, but also the political ideas and ideals of Carol. And the conflict between Bratianu and his brother-in-law, Prince Barbu-Stirbey, on the one side and Carol on the other, became so violent that Carol, while on a tour abroad one day, informed his family that he did not wish to return home. Jonel Bratianu immediately jumped at the opportunity, and Crown Prince Carol was thus deprived of the right of succession, his minor son, Michael, becoming heir to the crown of Rumania. 'Gentlemen, so this is my New Year,' said King Ferdinand to the political leaders of the country, after reading Carol's letter of resignation which arrived on New Year's Day, 1926.

Carol probably wrote his letter of resignation in a fit of temper. When it was so promptly accepted, he became enraged; and the following years were a period of struggle between the Bratianu dynasty and Carol. In July, 1927, King Ferdinand died, and young Michael, then six years of age, became King of Rumania. Fate seemed to play into the hands of Carol: on the twenty-fourth of November of the same year his great adversary, Jonel Bratianu, died. It is true that another member of the Bratianu dynasty, Vintila Bratianu, had taken over the premiership, but, although Vintila was known as a first-class financier, in politics his reputation was less marked. The spring of the following year improved the situation in favour of Carol: the unrest of the United National Peasant Party, under the leadership of the Transylvanian Julius Maniu, had become increasingly visible; and on May 7, 1928, it culminated in a mass meeting of one hundred fifty thousand peasants who, assembling in Alba Julia, Transylvania, demanded that Bratianu resign and Maniu be appointed in his place, and proposed to march on Bucharest.

There is reason to believe that Crown Prince Carol, or, as he was called in his exile, Mr. Carol Caraiman, enjoyed the support of the Peasant Party and was in contact with the dissatisfied leaders of the party. On the same day that the big peasant meeting in Alba Julia took place, two airplanes were waiting in England to take Carol and his friends from Godstone in Surrey to Rumania. When he was asked by journalists whether his intended departure was connected with the mass meeting in Alba Julia, Carol declared: 'I have no connection whatever with any political party in Rumania. I merely intended to take the opportunity of the Peasant Party meet-

ing at Alba Julia to issue a manifesto in order to avoid possible bloodshed among my people.' Twenty thousand copies of this manifesto were printed in London, and in them Carol is said to have stated: 'I wish to return by your will to lead Rumania to her rightful place in the world. I declare that I left my country unwillingly, compelled by unhappy circumstances. Madame Lupescu was not the cause of my leaving and she will not prevent me from doing my duty to my country.' The airplanes were, however, prevented by the British authorities from leaving England, and next day a police inspector drove up to the Surrey mansion where Carol was staying and asked him to leave the country as soon as possible.

'This is terribly painful,' was all the Prince had to say. 'May I ask the reason?' 'I can give you no reason,' answered the inspector politely but firmly.

Already the *Morning Post* had indicated that a powerful newspaper enterprise whose owner was making a campaign in favour of Hungarian revision was supporting Carol, and that if this restoration occurred Carol had pledged to return certain parts of Transylvania to Hungary.

Owing to the censorship in Rumania, the people of the country remained unaware of the adventurous moves of Carol in London, but the Rumanian Government found ways to inform the peasant leaders that Carol had tried to purchase a crown for himself by sacrificing part of Rumania to Hungary. This revelation incensed the Peasant Party leaders, who were even more *intransigent* about the Hungaro-Rumanian frontier question than was Premier Bratianu, and naturally served as a disheartening factor in their further actions. Thus, partly due to these revelations, but chiefly because of the clever tactics of Bratianu's representative, the Under-Secretary George Tatarescu (at present Premier), because of geographic difficulties of the route to Bucharest, and because the peasants began to be weary of the show, most of the pilgrims gave up the trip, only thirty or forty miles from Alba Julia. Thus ended the proposed march on Bucharest, and Carol had to change his residence from Surrey to Paris.

The march on Bucharest may have proved a failure in May, but in November, 1928, the Regency established to rule during Michael's minority had to ask Julius Maniu to take over the Government in Rumania. His Government eliminated much of the obsolete and



A GROUP OF SYKELIANOS DANCERS IN GREEK NATIONAL  
COSTUMES IN THE ZAPPEION



CHATEAU OF SINAIA

Where King Carol II spends both summer and winter.  
Madame Lupescu also lives mostly in Sinaia.

retrogressive legislation and abolished the censorship. Elections without terror were held and gave a huge majority to the followers of Maniu.

On June 6, 1930, Carol returned to Rumania, with the knowledge and assistance of Maniu, and was proclaimed King of Rumania. His return was sudden, but by no means unexpected, having been preceded by a campaign of the Liberals in which the vilest invectives were used against him. Jon Duca, later Premier, is said to have been the soul of these attacks, since Vintila Bratianu was too old to have led the campaign.

Though it was through the aid of the Peasant Party that Carol was able to regain his throne, he did not prove a grateful monarch. Very soon there were serious divergences of opinion between him and Maniu, especially because of Magda Lupescu. Maniu maintained that King Carol had given his word to part with her; and he believed that for the sake of his country and Michael, the returned King should now dismiss his mistress and remarry Hélène, who had been forced into a divorce by the Bratianus in June, 1928. But the King felt that he could not do without Magda, and recalled her to Rumania. Since then she has been living in a villa in Bucharest not far from the Cotroceni Royal Palace, or in Sinaia.

Rumania is in many ways an ideal hothouse of Right extremism. Though the land reform after the war abolished part of the large estates, it could not bring prosperity to the small landowner. The peasants were hit not only by the fall of agricultural prices, occasioned by the world slump, but also by the agrarian protection of many of their former customers, such as Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Austria. With heavy debts and little hope of paying them, it was but natural that they should come to hate the banking interests which were represented in the Liberal Party, while four years' rule of the Peasant Party had not brought them the alleviation which they hoped to attain. Moreover, the seven universities of the country were continuously increasing the 'spiritual proletariat' who could not find proper employment. The officials were underpaid and were obliged to accept bribes, and the higher officials were known to be corrupt. In addition, anti-Semitism is an established institution in Rumania; until recent times, the Jews had not even civil rights. It was an old custom in Old Rumania to divert political unrest by stirring up pogroms. All these factors combined to make a platform for the Nazis.

In the post-war days, the almost Orthodox anti-Semite group of the now octogenarian Professor of Jassy University, Doctor N. Cuza, represented the dissatisfied groups who tried to lead their policies based on religious fanaticism and anti-Jewish prejudices. But a pupil of Cuza, son of a professor of a secondary school in Moldavia, young Cornelius Zelea-Codreanu, took over the leadership of a new party which was undoubtedly a National Socialist Party with a Rumanian colouring. While most of the political and economic principles of Codreanu's Iron Guards were copied from the German Nazi or the Italian Fascist programme, in contrast with them one of the fundamental points of the programme of Codreanu is co-operation with the Church. Moreover, he preaches a return to old Rumanian traditions, and usually wears Rumanian national dress. The Iron Guards were building up the party all over the country, and attained success not only in Moldavia and Bessarabia as well as Bukowina, but also in the old Wallachia and amongst the youth in Transylvania. Wherever they create an organization, they build a church, a school and a bridge, which they name after a Roman Emperor or after a Rumanian national hero; and with this activity they try to gain the peasants: 'Can you see? While the others are talking, we do something for you!'

The failure of the National Peasant Party (which unfortunately came to power during the world economic crisis) to remedy the ills of the peasantry naturally caused the doom of their régime and helped the Liberals to return to power. The quarrel with Maniu caused Carol to forget his old grievances against the Liberals; and, on November 12, 1933, exactly five years after Maniu had come to power, Jon G. Duca, the leader of the Liberal Party (Vintila Bratianu having died), was appointed Premier of Rumania. The fury of the Iron Guards now turned against the Liberals, the more so because Duca announced firm measures against this Nazi organization. When the terror of the Iron Guards increased, he outlawed the movement.

For answer, Duca was murdered by agents of the Iron Guards at Sinaia Station on December 29, 1933, after he had had audience with King Carol. The King now appointed the young George Tatarescu, who had so skilfully handled the peasant march on Bucharest in 1928. Tatarescu is extremely able and is aware of the difficulties of his own situation. His party's position has been much



weakened, not only by the opposition of the Peasant Party, but also by the unceasing propaganda of the Iron Guards, which, though technically dissolved, continued to exist by underground propaganda. Moreover, many other smaller oppositional groups jumped into existence. George Bratianu, adopted son of Jonel Bratianu, has become a Dissident Liberal and formed his own Neo-Liberal Party, which is more to the Right. Also, the Transylvanian poet, Octavian Goga, has allied himself with Cuza; and together they have a Fascist-anti-Semitic combination with considerable support.

In addition to this, there is a clique round King Carol which is said to be not unfriendly to the Iron Guards. Nicholas Titulescu, for years Foreign Minister of Rumania, has fought valiantly against this clique, but achieved only partial victory because Magda Lupescu protects these dangerous men. For Magda is not only the friend of Carol; she is a most important political influence in Rumania. Her enemies assert that without her no real career can be made or continued in Bucharest; and some even maintain that important contracts cannot be concluded without her knowledge and consent.

There is something tragic in Titian-haired Magda's character. She was born in Rumania, the daughter of a baptized Jew and an 'Aryan' woman. The *entourage* in which she grew up suggested nothing about her Jewish origin; and it was only when she was grown-up that she learned that she had Jewish blood in her veins. This brought a strange conflict into her soul; already she had been infected by anti-Semitism, and now she realized that she was 'one of them.' Out of this conflict grew her determination to support Zelea-Codreanu. But a section of the Iron Guards, under the leadership of Stelescu, placed this 'Jewish woman' at the top of their list of those destined for assassination — number two being Titulescu. Stelescu was murdered by the followers of Codreanu, and the lawyers maintained that the police could not find Codreanu, who was suspected of complicity, because he was hidden in the house of Madame Lupescu.

The end of 1937 proved to be a critical time for Rumania. The old Parliament's life expired, and Premier Tatarescu arranged new elections. What happened was without precedent in Rumania: the Premier in power lost the elections; that is, he could not acquire the forty per cent of the votes which assure a Rumanian statesman a comfortable working majority. Tatarescu was able to obtain only

thirty-seven per cent of the votes; the National Peasant Party received twenty-two per cent, and the Iron Guards sixteen per cent. But though the Goga-Cuza grouping received not even ten per cent of the total votes, King Carol entrusted Octavian Goga, the Transylvanian poet-politician, with the formation of a Cabinet on December 28, 1937.

The King's idea probably was to fight the devil with Beelzebub. He noticed that the anti-Semitic nationalist program of Cornelius Zelea-Codreanu had made considerable progress, and as Goga and Cuza were also propounding a nationalistic and anti-Semitic program, the King thought that, by choosing the lesser evil, he would be able to fight the Iron Guards. But Goga proved to be a completely incompetent politician and his terror only increased the wrath of the Iron Guards (or, as they called themselves, the 'All for the Fatherland' group). Moreover, the measures which the Government threatened to take against the Jews caused complete disorientation in business life. The economic life of the country came to a standstill and the silent cannery of the Jews threatened to ruin the country's tax revenues. Under these circumstances, King Carol dismissed Goga on February 9, and appointed the Patriarch, Miron Cristea, as Premier, including several ex-Premiers in the Cabinet. The old Constitution had been abolished, and a new Constitution proclaimed. Later in March the Cristea Government was once more reshuffled, excluding the Liberal members from the Cabinet. Tatarescu, who acted as deputy-Premier and Foreign Minister in the first Cristea Cabinet, ceased to be a member of the second Cristea Government and Nicholas Petrescu-Comnen, a diplomat, who had been until recently in Berlin, was appointed Foreign Minister.

The experiment with the Cristea Government was intended to break the power of the political parties and especially that of the Iron Guards. Moreover, King Carol wished to establish a régime which would be his obedient tool. He realized that dangerous times were ahead, and he wished to concentrate enough power in his hands so that he would be able to deal with emergencies.

King Carol viewed with great distress the growing power of the dictatorships. The experiment with the Goga Government served the purpose of establishing better relations with Italy and also, to a certain extent, with Germany. But when the assault on Austria started, Carol realized the dangers which were threatening South-

eastern Europe, and, while still attempting to have correct and friendly relations with Germany, he perceived that the German push may be directed ultimately against the Rumanian oil-wells. For this reason, on Carol's initiative, Rumania's relations with Russia, which for some years had been far from good, began rapidly to improve. Rumania knows that Russia has no intention of taking away her oil-wells; also she hopes soon to settle with Russia the question of the status of Bessarabia. Moreover, Rumania wishes to keep on extremely good terms with Czechoslovakia and with Hungary.

## CHAPTER X

### SAY IT WITH MURDER

ALBANIA is the only European country that never had a railway age. It jumped from the mule to the automobile and the airplane. And it is Zog I, Mpret — or King — of all Albanians, who has carried this romantic land of the Squipetars from barbarism to civilization in fifteen years.

Albania claims, and apparently with reason, to be populated by the oldest tribes of Europe. The Illyrians, together with the Thracians, who form the basis of the race, were probably the first of the ancient Indo-European folk who left their original Asiatic home and emigrated to Europe. They settled in the territory bounded by the Adriatic on the one side and the Pindus Mountains on the other. And, though scientific evidence is not sufficient to confirm this claim, Albanian scientists believe that an ancient indigenous European people, the Liburnians, a branch of the Pelasges, were living in Albania when the first great migration of the peoples, about sixteen centuries before our era, brought their Indo-European ancestors to the Balkans. The ancient Pelasgian words which are claimed to be in the language are supposed to be similar to some words in the Basque language. But these are busy efforts of modern Albanian scholars, eager to prove the ancient connections, whose theories have not yet fully stood the test of fire. On the other hand, one finds in the Albanian language many Roman words which must have come into it during the Roman occupation, while words from all the neighbouring tongues, Turkish, Greek, Serb, or Glagolith, were taken over during the centuries to make this primitive language more adaptable to modern use. Though the revival of the language started back in the last century when important foreign settlements of Albanians in Boston, in Bucharest, in Cairo, in Zara (Dalmatia), in Bari, in Trieste, and in Vienna laboured to convert the idiom of

mountain goatherds into a literary language, this language obtained real 'schooling' only during the last decade.

But though the Albanians can claim to be the earliest settlers of the Continent, they were the last European nation to obtain European civilization, and until fifteen years ago the greatest part of the country lived in a state of primitive tribal existence, such as most European nations experienced fifteen hundred years ago.

Railways are non-existent in Albania. Though an important encyclopaedia mentions the existence of 'Décauville' railways in the North, I have hunted in vain to find the trace of them during my repeated visits. It is true that, during the years of wartime occupation of Albania, the Austrians built some narrow-gauge field railways, but these were really attempts only to lay some tracks for the transport of war material and were constructed without any solid foundation. Floods, weather, and human hands caused even the superstructure to disappear; and if nowadays one sees some narrow-gauge railways in Albania, they are only a few rails laid by Italian engineers to help in the transportation of material for road-making purposes.

Thanks to an Italian loan, given in 1925, and to some other loans given by Rome, a large programme of road-building has been developed, and over twelve hundred miles of good highroads have been constructed. Sixty modern bridges span the fast rivers, while frequent flights between Scutari, Tirana, Valona, and Kortcha enable the Albanians to reach these large cities by this most modern of all means of communication. And there is a regular schedule of flying connection between Tirana and Rome via Bari.

But if Albania became from a primitive Balkan country a modern State, with thousands of motor-cars rolling along good highways and fast Italian airplanes flying over her rugged country, it is probably even more remarkable that the most murder-loving of all races has been converted into a law-abiding nation. Only twelve years ago the blood feud was the law of the northern mountain tribes. This blood feud was based on the legislation of a fifteenth-century Prince and is called the *Kanun Lek Dukagzinit* — the Law Code of Alex, Prince of the Dukageni. It was a primitive law code, based on the Old-Testament standard, 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.' It decreed that if a brother of a warrior was killed, this warrior was entitled to murder his brother's murderer wherever

he found him. It prescribed precisely the form of revenge and the number of friends of the murderer to be killed, if such and such a relative were murdered. With the ages this developed into a regular and continuous warfare between the mountain tribes. Mortal enmity, which demanded the extermination of the friends of the murderer in cases when the murderer and the murdered person belonged to two different tribes, involved enmity between the clans, was called in the mountains, 'standing in blood.' It could end only if a *bessa* (armistice, or peace) was made between the tribes involved. To travel from a tribal district which was 'in blood' with its neighbour was no fun, and very few gendarmes were willing to be escorts on such journeys. It is due only to the fact that the Albanian shoots away too many cartridges before he hits that I escaped unhurt from such a shooting affray in 1922 in the Mirdite part of Northern Albania.

Thousands and thousands of Albanians perished in this way in the mountains of Shala before, during, and after the war. Even such a friend of Albania as Baron Franz Nopcsa admitted that in Dusmana, Kaznjeti, Kacinari, Snjerc, Sosi, and Sala, twenty-three to twenty-six per cent of the male population perished through murder, while this figure increases to twenty-eight per cent in Nerfandina, to thirty-two in Spaci, and to forty-two in Toplana. It is a generally adopted phrase in Albania that 'in Toplana men are killed like pigs.' The average of murders in the whole Malisori (mountain) district, however, is given by Nopcsa at nineteen per cent. When I was in Northern Albania fifteen years ago, the blood feud was still the law which settled punishment for murder between family and family, between tribe and tribe. Today the blood feud has vanished; the tribesmen are disarmed, and Northern Albania is more peaceful than the bordering Montenegrin districts of Yugoslavia or the neighbouring Florina district of Greece. Those who know the Albanians have always realized the high qualities of the race. It is true that the Illyrian-Thracian blood is restless; and wherever this blood can be traced, we often find brother feud and rancour amongst related tribes, such as was the case in Northern Albania or with the related Macedonians. But despite this heritage of ancient days the abilities of the race are evident. The Albanians proudly maintain that Alexander the Great, through his mother, had Albanian blood. In the darkest days of the Middle Ages, when all neighbouring coun-

tries were already subdued to Turkish rule, the country produced a hero such as George Castriota, known also as Skanderbeg. Pope Clement XI, the famous Cardinal Albani, and the great Italian statesman, Francesco Crispi, were of Albanian origin. Mehemet Ali, the founder of the Khedivial dynasty in Egypt, was an Albanian. Twenty-five grand viziers and numerous high officials and officers of the Turkish armies during the last centuries were Albanians and many believe that Kamal Ataturk has Albanian blood in his veins.

The Turkish Sultans realized these qualities of the Albanians, and, while they cleverly utilized it by calling the ablest sons of the Squipetars to their court for high services, they took good care to keep the country in such terror that these abilities of the Albanians on the one hand, and their boundless individualism and love for liberty on the other, should not have a chance to manifest themselves. The rugged, mountainous country was left in a primitive state. There were not even proper routes of communication. The roads in the plains were miserable and in the mountains non-existent. The only communication was the mule with which one could take the stony path along the deep river-cañons. Even fifteen years ago three miserable old Ford motor-cars, left behind by an American relief mission, constituted the total rolling stock of Albania. By 1930 the number of motor-cars had risen to one thousand; now it has passed two thousand.

It was in 1912 that the first chance of independence seemed to have come. Naturally some efforts had already been made by the freedom-loving Albanians, yearning for liberty, as most mountain people do, to shake off the unbearable Turkish yoke, but these risings always failed. Ali Pasha Tepelani's famous fight against the Sultans, which resulted in bringing Albania and parts of Greece under his rule for some years, will remain one of the most romantic chapters of the history of the twenties of the past century. There were repeated attempts at risings in the nineteenth century, until at last the Balkan Wars brought the chance of the Albanians.

The leaders of the Albanian revolutionaries realized fully that they had to proceed cautiously. The neighbouring Powers, especially Greece and Serbia, were scheming to carve out pieces of Albania and annex them to their own countries. Moreover, Italy and Austria also coveted Albania; and only mutual rivalry kept them from partitioning the country. Under these circumstances the Albanian leaders'

efforts were directed toward obtaining autonomy rather than independence, since autonomy would have constituted an armed Turkish guaranty for the endeavours of free cultural, political, and economic development. Thus the Albanians welcomed the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, hoping to attain their aims through the constitutional endeavours of the Young Turks. But when in 1912 the First Balkan War broke out, and Serbian and Montenegrin troops occupied parts of Northern Albania while the Greeks penetrated to the south, Ismail Kemal Bey (known also as Ismail Bey Vlora) raised the banner of independence on November 28, 1912, in Valona in the presence of more than eighty Albanian leaders. The year 1913 was a momentous one in the history of Albania, because in that year the London 'reunion' of the Great Powers established the independent Albanian Principality. A provisional Albanian Government, consisting of Rasih Dino, Mehmed Konitza, and Philip Nogga, was trying desperately to gain independence for the million and a half Albanians. The Serbs, on the other hand, wanted an outlet to the Adriatic via Albania; the Montenegrins claimed Scutari and the lower reaches of the Bojana River, while the Greeks wanted the greater part of Southern Albania. The Serbs and Greeks were supported by Russia; to counteract Russia's satellites in the Western Balkans, Italy and Austria attempted to make the new Albania as large as possible. Great Britain was on the fence, not wishing to give excessive advantages either to Russia or to Italy on this important shore of the Adriatic. Thus a compromise solution was found and probably more than half a million Albanians were sacrificed to Serbian and Greek rule. Nevertheless, a new and independent Albania was born as a result of the London Conference of the Powers.

Eleven Princes, amongst them German, French, English, Rumanian, Italian, and Turkish, were mentioned on the list of candidates of the Powers, and at last Prince Wilhelm von Wied, a German officer, was accepted as Mpret of Albania. An international gendarmerie was also provided, but this régime was of short duration. Wied could not establish his rule firmly; and soon after the outbreak of the Great War he had to leave the country.

The war brought a period of distress to Albania. The country was ravaged by the terror of Essad Pasha, and by Austrian, Italian, French, and Greek occupation of various districts, while the retreating Serbian armies found their way to Corfu across the territory of



this unfortunate Principality without a Prince. After the war these occupying troops were withdrawn. The Italians were compelled to evacuate Valona in 1920. The Serbs were checked in the northern mountains by the fighting tribes of Albania. In December, 1918, Turkhan Pasha and some leading persons tried once more to establish an independent government. The National Assembly, which met in Lusnja, elected four regents, two Mohammedans, one Roman Catholic, and one Orthodox, the population of the country being sixty-nine per cent Mohammedan, ten per cent Roman Catholic, and twenty per cent Orthodox. In August, 1920, an Italo-Albanian treaty was signed in Tirana in which Italy agreed to evacuate Valona, but retained the important island of Sasseno. In December, 1920, Albania was accepted as a member of the League of Nations. In the autumn, Serbian influence succeeded in fomenting a revolt in the Mirditi (Northern Albania), and as an excuse to 'restore order' Serbian troops crossed the frontier and occupied the northern territory. A young Albanian, Achmet Bey Zogu (now King Zog I), however, roused his tribesmen in Mati and offered resistance to the invading Serbs. Albania at the same time appealed to the League of Nations in August, 1921. Yugoslavia first tried to deny the League's competence on the question of the future frontiers of Albania, and to bring the matter before the Council of Ambassadors. In November, 1921, the Powers once more recognized the independence of Albania, and the frontiers were settled at the delimitation conference at Florence. The Serbs, however, withdrew their troops only after the League of Nations threatened them with repressive measures in November, 1922.

In this Serbian raid episode we have already met the figure of Achmet Bey Zogu who henceforth was to figure pre-eminently in the history of modern Albania. Achmet Bey Zogu (or Zogogli, also called Achmet Bey Mati) was born on October 8, 1895, the son of the chief of the Mati district, the powerful Djemal Pasha. Achmet was only thirteen years of age when his father died, and his mother, a clever and ambitious woman, sent him to the Galata school for pages in Constantinople and later to the school for officers. Achmet left the school in 1912 when the First Balkan War began and, with another sixteen-year-old cousin, who was in school in Salonica, returned to Albania, where he roused his Mati tribesmen to fight against the invading Serbs. Young Achmet was present in Valona

when Ismail Kemal Bey raised the flag of Albanian independence.

In 1914, together with the Mirditi chief, Prenk Bib Doda, he supported the Prince of Wied. During the war he became friendly with the Austrians who occupied the country. But when in the war days Achmet wanted to call together an Albanian National Congress in Elbassan, the Austrians thought that he might become too dangerous and politely 'invited' him to come to Vienna, where he stayed until the end of the Great War. After the armistice he returned to Albania and Turkhan Pasha entrusted him with the command of the army. In 1921 he was fighting the invading Serbs in his home Matiland where Burgayet, his ancestral castle, is situated. But while the Serbs were busy against Albania, Italy attempted to exploit the anti-Serb feeling in the country, and engineered a *coup d'état* to bring the Government into the hands of the anti-Serb Kossovo Albanians. In pursuance of this plot, about twenty men penetrated clandestinely into the house of Pandeli Evangeli, the Premier, surrounded his bed, wakened him with the muzzles of their rifles, and asked him to resign. He did, and left Tirana on horseback immediately. The supreme power rested in the hands of the four Regents, the Prime Minister, and Parliament. Parliament was not in session. Two of the Regents were abroad. The two other Regents sympathized with the rising. The Prime Minister fled.

But strangely, next morning the revolters found themselves faced with an unexpected obstruction: the Government employees struck; everything went dead: no telephone, no telegraph, no messengers, no clerks. Before the two Regents could do anything, Achmet had marched into Tirana with twelve hundred of his Mati-men—a forced march from the Mirditi to Tirana in less than sixty hours! Most of his original warriors could not endure the strain, but he was able to replace the tired and the sick by new volunteers as he marched on. There was no fighting, his presence being sufficient to establish order. Twelve hundred muzzles still carried weight in those days! Dshafer Uebi became Premier, and Achmet Bey was appointed Minister of the Interior.

When Elles Jussuf, the chief of Dibra, and Hamid Bey Toptani tried to make another revolt somewhat later, Achmet was the only member of the Government who dared to offer resistance and fought personally in the field against Jussuf's troops. All other members of the Government fled, but Achmet stuck it through, and was the

'Government' until he achieved a victory and the others could come back. The Prime Minister did not return, and Achmet continued as Minister of the Interior in the Shefket Bey Verlaci Cabinet.

Shefket Bey Verlaci was one of the big landowners in the country, and the young Albanians were dreaming of reform, abolition of the old reaction, and distribution of the land. The Albanians of Boston were probably the banner-bearers of this reform movement, and contributed a fund of fifty thousand dollars to make a revolution against the reactionary régime in Albania. In 1924, the progressives won a victory and their revolution brought into power the Orthodox Bishop Fan Noli, who was and still is the Bishop of the Albanian community in Boston. Fan Noli, who was educated at Harvard, is an intelligent and well-meaning person who not only wished the best for his country, but hoped to establish a really democratic and progressive régime in this primitive country. But he counted without Achmet.

After the Fan Noli revolution, Achmet Bey Zogu escaped to Yugoslavia. Spending some time in exile in Vienna and Belgrade, he succeeded in obtaining support from the Serbs. Meanwhile, Fan Noli had committed an unpardonable *faux pas*: he had recognized the Soviets (following the example of J. Ramsay MacDonald who was Premier in Great Britain at the time when Fan Noli was Premier in Albania). This was an unforgivable sin in the eyes of the Powers; and Yugoslavia knew that her intervention would now not be hindered. On Christmas Day, 1924, Achmet, supported by about six hundred Kossovo Albanians, by some Serbian mercenaries, and by a few former Wrangel troops, marched into Mati, where he was welcomed. After minor skirmishes with the Dibrani, he marched on into Tirana, the army sent out by Fan Noli to oppose him being 'too proud to fight.'

In January, 1925, Achmet established the permanent Government and became the first President of the Albanian Republic. On September 1, 1928, he proclaimed himself King of Albania, styling himself Zog I. The early days of his rule were connected with severe repression and terror, and, as the blood feud still existed, the relatives of his murdered opponents, many of whom were hanged on the trees just at the entrance of the main road to Tirana, started a campaign of blood feuds against him. About eight hundred blood feuds were declared against him, and for several years the President-

King could not leave his palace except after elaborate precautionary measures. During one of my stays in Tirana (this was in 1930) King Zog was to proceed to open Parliament. Though the distance to be covered from his palace (which is a modest villa) to Parliament was less than half a mile, a large police and military force flanked the streets, which had to be evacuated; and everybody in the houses bordering on the King's route was told to stay away from the windows under a threat of being shot on sight. But if the first years of his régime were full of terror and caused great dissatisfaction, it must be said that Achmet, who is undoubtedly a great patriot, wished to do the best for his country and that he has achieved an incredibly magnificent success in Westernizing his primitive Albania. And although he uses an iron fist, his methods are by no means as arbitrary as those of Kamal Atatürk. In introducing Western reforms he prefers persuasion to compulsion, in many ways. He has used foreign help to a great extent. If he has fallen too much into Italian hands, it has not been his fault. He would have preferred English or American support, but nobody wanted to give money to a country with so troubled a past.

When Zog came to power, he relied on the counsel of an intelligent British ex-officer, Colonel Stirling, who had been with Lawrence in Arabia and later was Commissioner of the Southern Palestine Administration. Stirling saw at once that Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece were fomenting intrigue and coveting influence in Albania. It was obvious to him that if Achmet was to consolidate his power he had to make friends with one of the three. Yugoslavia would have been the most obvious one to turn to. But Belgrade refused to give the money which was badly required to consolidate the power at home. Moreover, in the autumn of 1926 a revolt broke out in the North, supposedly fomented by the Serbs. Greece herself was passing through revolutionary days and monetary support from her was impossible.

So there was only Italy. In June, 1926, the Italian Minister in Tirana, Baron Aloisi (since famous for his part as Italy's representative at the League during the Italo-Ethiopian War), called on President Achmet with a telegram in his hand, which he said was from Mussolini. He also had a draft treaty in his hand, and he told Achmet: 'Sign this treaty and make Mussolini happy!' The treaty was in substance the Treaty of Tirana. Aloisi said that it would be

accompanied by a gift of three thousand rifles, an equal number of uniforms, ten batteries of three-inch guns, five hundred machine guns, two thousand mules, and a loan of fifty million gold lire (about two million pounds in gold). Achmet hesitated, and appealed to the British, but could not obtain the support he hoped for from this quarter. In those days relations between Great Britain and Italy had become good through the visit of Sir Austen Chamberlain. Baron Aloisi threatened a breakdown of diplomatic relations. In fact, he left on a gunboat, but relations were not broken off. As the British Minister, who apparently as a friend of Albania was not in favour of the developments, was recalled, Aloisi's friends could spread the tale in Tirana that Mussolini's influence with the British Foreign Office had caused the recall of the Minister. On November 20 there was a rising and an attack on Scutari. The situation was precarious. Under the decision of the Council of Ambassadors, Italy had the right to intervene in Albania if the internal situation should become threatening. What to do? On November 27, 1926, the Pact of Tirana was signed, and a year later the defensive alliance between Italy and Albania. The gold lire loan of fifty millions was, of course, paid in installments, and carried a nominal interest rate of seven and a half per cent. The Albanian Government did not receive any cash from this loan: all the money was handed over to the 'Society for the Economic Reconstruction of Albania.' Since then another loan has been granted by Italy, the non-payment of the services on which brought a temporary clash between Italy and Albania two years ago, but the resumption of the payments have made Italo-Albanian relations firmer than ever before.

Much good work has been done since then. Twelve hundred and fifty miles of roads have been built; the harbor of Durazzo has been completely reconstructed and converted into a safe and modern port; San Giovanni di Medua and Santi Quaranta also will be reconstructed. Tirana has been transformed from a miserable Turkish village of just over ten thousand inhabitants into a thriving and prosperous city of thirty thousand, with wide boulevards and good buildings in the Government quarters. Hospitals have been erected and schools established. In 1912 there was one lone w.c. in the whole of Albania; now sanitation, if not ideal, is making much progress.

One of the greatest achievements, however, has been the establishment of law and order in a primitive tribal country where the motto

was, 'Say it with murder!' This is chiefly due, besides Achmet's will to establish order, to the counsel of Colonel Stirling, who advised the King (then President) to bring English officers to create a good gendarmerie. General Percy took over the organization of this gendarmerie, bringing with him sixteen English officers, mostly with plenty of experience on the North-West frontier of India. The efforts of these young men proved a success: within a few years modern civil law has replaced the bloody laws of Lek Dukadzin.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE 'ISMS' OF CENTRAL AND SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

ALL of Europe today seems aligned in the bitter struggle between those mortal enemies, Socialism and Bolshevism on the Left, and on the Right, Fascism and National Socialism. Yet, the more we analyze them, the more they all lead us back to the same common source, Karl Marx. Just as the Old Testament is the real fountain of all later religious movements, such as Christ's faith, Mohammedanism, the Roman Catholic Church, and the various forms of Protestantism, in the same way Marx's teachings have supplied the original root to all other 'isms' of today.

After the various forms of Utopian Socialism at the beginning of the past century, Marx had founded his scientific Socialism which then decisively influenced all the Socialist parties on the Continent. Only in the Latin countries and in Russia did the anarchist ideas of a Proudhon and of a Bakunin survive, sometimes independently, but more often by influencing the development of Marxist Socialism.

In the Northern countries of Europe, Marxian Socialism, pure and simple, became the dominant movement in shaping the ideas of the working classes, though even here the theories of Marx were submitted to various interpretations, while the British trade unions and, later on, the Labour Party, were still hesitant to base their labour programme on Marxist teachings. In Germany, where the Marxist movement was probably strongest, it came first to a division between Marx and Lasalle, and later, after the union of these two groups, Eduard Bernstein's 'revisionist' policy brought temporary dissension into party ranks. But in the nineties and in the first decade of the present century the originally revolutionary theories of Marx, as he advocated them in 1848, and as they were put into practice during the Commune in Paris in 1871, were discarded, and the 'revisionist',

platform was adopted which intended to conquer the power for the proletariat by evolutionary development, with the aid of the ballot box.

The rapid spread of the Bernsteinite form of Marxism, however, brought opposition in the Latin countries, where the Southern temperament was less inclined to accept a policy of 'wait and see' and to sacrifice the once cherished revolutionary movement. Here in these countries the doctrine of Syndicalism developed, which kept as its basis the teachings of Marx, but parted ways on the question of establishing the new society. Whereas the Socialists expect control by the consumer exercised through the authority of the Socialist State and its organs, the Syndicalists want this control to rest in the hands of the producers and be exercised by their own organization, namely, the trade unions. Though Ferdinand Pelloutier and Jules Guesde were probably the most outstanding figures of this movement, its philosopher was George Sorel whose influence on the ideas of our era has been insufficiently understood.

George Sorel was a remarkable man, self-taught, and somewhat confused in his ideas. But he could debate with great passion, and he formulated the most important philosophical, political, and economic features of Syndicalism. Proudhon, of course, had a deep influence on him, but probably even more deep was the influence of Henri Bergson's philosophy. In his *Reflections on Violence* he writes:

For a long time Socialism was a Utopia; the Marxists quite rightly claim for themselves the honour of having changed this: Socialism has become a preparatory fight of the masses employed in the big industries and desirous of suppressing State and property. . . . Unfortunately, Marx lost sight of certain facts which have become familiar with us; we, for example, know better the importance of strikes . . . the myth about the general strike has become increasingly popular and is deeply entrenched in people's minds; we have ideas about violence which he hardly could have formed; we can complete his doctrine, instead of commenting his texts as his unfortunate disciples are doing.

It was the invention of Sorel and of the Syndicalists (naturally under the influence of Proudhon and Bergson) to advocate the application of violence, in the form of strikes, in the form of sabotage,



'direct action,' or whatever other form, all these being aimed at speeding up the attainment of the aims of the proletariat. Moreover, Sorel felt a great contempt for the voice of the majority: only an energetic minority, by means of violence, can really win a fight. This 'invention' of George Sorel (which unfortunately is as old as is humanity) has fatally influenced the developments of our days. Though both Lenin and Trotzky were in disagreement with the economic principles of Sorel, his ideas about violence found ready ears. Lenin had the opportunity during his stay in Paris to learn through his Russian friends about the doctrines of the Syndicalists, and later the Syndicalists were extremely active in Switzerland where Lenin and Trotzky found refuge during the war. Even if Professor Seipel's accusations that Sorel fundamentally influenced the revolutionary activities of Lenin and Trotzky do not hold good, nevertheless, it is obvious that Sorel's influence on the Russian Socialist leaders was great, especially as far as the choice of revolutionary methods were concerned.

Mussolini openly admitted that Sorel's influence on him was decisive. In his book, *Fascism*, Mussolini recently summarized the doctrines of his system, and he admitted that in 1919, when he called together his followers to form the Fascist grouping, he had no special plan for the system. He writes:

I brought with me the experiences of one thing: the experiences of Socialism from the year 1903-04 until the winter of 1914; that is, of about ten years. Experiences of a follower and of a leader, not of doctrine! My school, even in those days, was action. A uniform and universally accepted doctrine of Socialism had not existed since 1905 when the revisionist movement, led by Bernstein, started, and, on the other hand, a revolutionary movement of the Left began which in Italy never transgressed the threshold of phrases, while for Russian Socialism it signalled the beginnings of Bolshevism. Reformism, Revolutionism, Centrism, even the echoes of these expressions have faded away by now, while in the wide stream of Fascism the tendencies of Sorel, Péguy, Lagardelle, of the 'Mouvement Socialiste' can be rediscovered, as also that of the Italian Syndicalists who from 1904 until 1914 . . . brought a new note into the circles of the Italian Socialists dumbfounded by the compromise policy of Giolitti.

Fascism, indeed, borrowed its methods and some of its ideas from the Syndicalist movement, but these ideas were not brought into the

service of the dissatisfied proletarian masses, who regarded Mussolini as a renegade, but into the service of the small bourgeoisie which undoubtedly formed a large section of the town population in the Italian Kingdom. Fascism is a badly adulterated product of revolutionary Syndicalism, the most revolutionary amongst the Socialist movements (as the rôle of the Syndicalists in the Spanish civil war has also shown). Have the industrial captains who were supporting the new system of Mussolini in Italy by money and by other means ever considered the fact that Fascism one day may land where it began its career: namely, in revolutionary Syndicalism?

Furthermore, Mussolini has borrowed freely from the experiences of the White régime in Hungary, the first manifestations of a semi-Fascist and one hundred per cent National Socialist régime. And the methods of the Hungarian White Terror were the intensified form of the tortures employed by the Red Terror of the Cserny Boys in Budapest, who in turn learned their methods during the days of the worst terror in Soviet Russia. Only the Whites were so much more efficient and less scrupulous than the Reds.

National Socialism, as we shall see in a later chapter, was similarly the product of Marxist teaching. In the old Austrian Empire, the German Liberal Left played an important rôle, and two of the most able of these German National Liberals of Austria, Victor Adler and Engelbert Pernersdorfer, landed ultimately in the Social Democratic camp. The influence of these men stamped on the Social Democratic Party of Austria a decidedly Pan-German character which survived until Hitler rose to power in Germany. It was Pernersdorfer who caused Doctor Walther Riehl, a former member of the Austrian Social Democratic Party, to become increasingly Pan-German; and out of this conviction of Riehl's was born the later *Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiter Partei* of Austria, which was the pattern for the similar party founded in Germany some years later.

Even the mildly Fascist Catholic Corporative State (*Staendestaat*) of Austria is based, in reality, on revolutionary Syndicalism, though both Dollfuss and Schuschnigg would be horrified if anyone should accuse them of having taken their ideas from such a 'dangerous' source. Yet the history of the *Staendestaat* idea is this: A group of highly intelligent British Socialist thinkers, led by the temperamental Irishman, Mr. Orage, but in whose ranks one could find such names as that of G. D. H. Cole, tried to 'tame' the revolutionary doctrines

of Syndicalism and to make it suitable to British taste. Out of these efforts was born the Guild Socialist movement which played a rather important rôle before the war, but even in later years it has influenced, often indirectly, the Trade Union movement in Great Britain. An Austrian scientist, Professor Othmar Spann, transplanted this British product onto German soil, by coupling it with the old *Staende* (Estates) idea of Adam Mueller, a queer Prussian economist and politician who lived in Vienna at the beginning of the past century. Thus replacing the guilds by the old historical Austrian 'estates,' the idea of the *staendische* organization of the State and society was propagated by Spann, especially in his book, *Der wahre Staat*. The Vatican sponsored Spann's idea in the *Quadragesimo Anno* encyclical which then made the whole idea suitable for the use of Austria. It has to be said for Hitler that while the party for some time tried to propagate the ideas of Spann, he always remained suspicious of them, and the original intention to include them in the National Socialist reconstruction scheme was ultimately dropped.

While the fight between the bourgeoisie and the town proletariat produced these 'isms' — Communism, Syndicalism, Anarchism, Socialism, Fascism, National Socialism alike — another important section of the population in these countries felt foreign in any camp. It came often under the domination of one or another; it was occasionally exploited for political purposes by the Fascists; but in its heart it kept aloof from this strange battle. This layer, which feels equally foreign among town proletariat and town bourgeoisie, is the peasant class. The end of the war (though even before the war there were signs of their awakening) brought many chances for their increased influence, which is now being manifested in another 'ism': Agrarianism. The next chapter will be devoted to a study of the growth of this movement.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE GREEN RISING

ONE of the interesting lessons of the many revolutions which the various countries of Europe have experienced during the past nineteen years was that the revolutionists often profited least by them. In Austria, Hungary, and Germany in 1918 the revolutions were made by the town workers while the peasants looked phlegmatically on. But where are the 'Reds' of these countries today? Their parties have been annihilated, their leaders shot, imprisoned, or exiled; their trade unions have been broken up and the fortunes of the Socialist organizations confiscated. But the peasants of Central and South-eastern Europe, though not contributing at all to the revolutions, are still in possession of the land and of other political and economic advantages which they gained all over Central and Southeastern Europe as a repercussion of the rising of the town proletariat. The peasant, yesterday a serf, is today, either directly or indirectly, the master of the Central European situation. He is marching hand in hand with the small bourgeoisie of the cities, another group which took no part in the original revolutions. This small bourgeoisie plays an apparently dominating rôle in many countries, but the peasants, though their rise was less evident and spectacular, are really their masters. Even the most autocratic dictatorships, such as Hitler's or Mussolini's, can exist only by the silent toleration of this inert yet compelling force — compelling through their number and the position which they occupy between Right and Left. Mussolini, probably to gain the favour of this important class, often boasts of belonging to the peasant class himself. 'The kind of people,' said Mussolini at a meeting of peasants in the Romagna in October, 1935, 'who like to rummage amongst old documents thought that I should be pleased by their discovery that my ancestors were noblemen. I told them: "Enough of this foolishness!" All my ancestors, my grandfather, my

great-grandfather, were tillers of the soil. To leave no doubt about my views I stuck a tablet on the wall of the old farm which states that many generations of Mussolinis before me have always tilled the soil with their hands.'

In Central Europe today the peasant holds, to a great extent, the nations' economics in his hands. More and more he shapes (often indirectly) the nations' politics. Yet his emergence on the scene has been so undramatic, so absolutely the result of circumstances which he himself did not precipitate, that students of European politics pass him over with hardly a word. While considering as a grave concern the 'Red menace' (a threat which has ceased to be a menace unless a new war makes it actual), they overlook the rising of the peasants, and yet this latter contains as many promises and threats as the 'Red' ascendancy once did.

This rise of the peasant constitutes the ascendancy of a class which before the war was definitely on the decline. In the nineties of the last century throughout Central Europe the agricultural population drifted into the cities to become industrial workers, and their holdings were often turned into hunting grounds for the aristocracy. This change was noticeable especially in the eastern parts of Germany, Austria, and Hungary, and also in many of the Balkan countries. In all these countries those peasants who survived represented the lowest standard of life of any class. They were ignorant to the point of illiteracy, except in Germany and Austria, and nobody attempted to educate them. Economically exploited by the towns, they worked from dawn till dark. Their toil began when they were small children, and they continued to live after the manner of their fathers, with no progress.

But the war, the successive revolutions, the Entente blockade of Central Europe, the inter-State barriers, all unmitigated catastrophes to the town populace, contributed to the rise of the peasant. Competition was killed by these 'calamities.' Russian and overseas wheat being no longer available, the Central European countries were compelled to raise their own food. Whereas before 1914 the basis of the economic life of Western-Central Europe was industrial production, and thus political power rested with the landowning class as well as with the big financiers and industrial captains, the war, to a considerable extent, shifted the economic basis of these countries back to food. The successive revolutions took food control out of the hands of the aristocrats.

The economic power gained during the war and after, by means of the blockade imposed from without on these countries and by the revolutions, placed a large part of the political power in the hands of the peasant, and for many years this hitherto unrepresented class gained increasing control over the affairs of Central and South-eastern Europe. It is true that the world economic crisis has hit agriculture in the first line, and the economic power of the peasant has temporarily diminished in consequence; but the other classes have also been impoverished during the long duration of the crisis. Thus the economic influence of the peasant suffered only absolutely, not relatively. Party-political developments in some countries and rise of dictatorships in others may have temporarily checked the peasant movement in part, but while suffering a setback in one country, it gained influence in another. Moreover, the economic recovery during the year 1936 has undoubtedly benefited the peasant throughout Southeastern Europe. Today it is generally admitted that the peasant is the backbone of the political and economic life of every Central and Southeastern European country. Every Parliament and each dictator must court him and is bound to arrange national policy according to the wishes of this large, silent, only semi-conscious and yet irresistible force.

The peasant's gains after the war were multifarious. Chief among them were: first, political power which he lacked before the war; second, agrarian reform in practically all Central and Southeastern European countries; third, the development of co-operative societies and banks; fourth, the creation of Chambers of Agriculture which were to represent the peasant interest; fifth, development of agricultural education; and sixth, social welfare institutions for the agricultural workers.

Since the Great War, fourteen countries in Central and South-eastern Europe have adopted legislation for agrarian land reform. With this move the most important wish of the peasant — namely, to obtain land sufficient to feed his family and to produce a small surplus — has been realized. The former serf has become a proprietor. The property-owner, however small his possession, evolves a mentality which in many ways is closely akin to that of the middle classes. Thus the land-reform acts, which came into existence through the sympathies of the Socialists for the oppressed peasants, created a new group which has become an enemy to those who helped the

peasants to the possession of land. The landless proletariat was on the way to becoming Bolshevik; the landed peasant, though by no means a Fascist, willingly tolerated the growth of movements which, he believed, were helping him to retain his newly acquired property. Thus the peasant is devouring his own brother, the town proletarian.

The importance of the increased influence of the peasantry will be realized if one takes into consideration that, of the total population of ninety-eight millions of Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania, sixty-eight millions — that is, almost seventy per cent — belong to the agricultural class.

In Czechoslovakia the new democratic Republic abolished the former feudal system of landownership as well as the ruling social conditions. In the former Austrian parts two thousand owners of large estates, mostly feudal noblemen, possessed one-third of the country, while two million peasants were landless or owned patches of land insufficient for their existence. The new possessors of power in Czechoslovakia, to counteract the influence of the former Austrian-German landowning aristocracy and the German industrial captains, supported the peasants, who were Czech Nationalists and democratic. Thus, already in the first Government coalitions after the war the Agrarians (officially described as the Republican Party) played a rather important part. In October, 1925, this largest amongst the non-Socialist Czech parties supplied the Premier, Antonin Svehla, and with the exception of a short-lived Cabinet of officials in 1926, ever since the Agrarians have supplied not only the Premier, but also the Ministers of War and other important Ministers in the Cabinet. Thus, the Agrarians in Czechoslovakia succeeded in obtaining a controlling voice not only in politics, but even in the army.

A very thorough land reform was introduced in Czechoslovakia, restricting ownership of land in general to six hundred and twenty-five acres, or at most to twelve hundred and fifty acres. An exception was made for districts of rare natural beauty; another exception was made for the so-called 'rest parts' — that is, such portions of the estates which contained a sugar factory or an alcohol distillery or a brewery requiring larger areas of cultivated land for its own use. By the survey of the State Land Office ten million acres of land were slated for redistribution. During the first ten years of the land reform more than three million acres of land were handed over to the new owners, of which nearly two million acres were arable land.

Fifty-three per cent of the partitioned estates passed into the hands of farmers who already possessed some land; twenty-three per cent to landless peasants, while twenty-four per cent passed into the hands of people belonging to other professions, many of whom were Czech legionaries during the war. Under the so-called 'colonization' scheme twenty-one hundred families were settled in one hundred and twenty already existing parishes and in twenty-eight newly created settlements, each obtaining a house and land to the extent of thirty to seventy-five acres. The number of people who received land under the land reform amounted to over half a million. During recent years a number of large forest properties have been divided up and parts of them allotted to various communities or towns.

Those who feared adverse effects of such a land reform in Czechoslovakia were mistaken. On the other hand, the measures adopted under the land reform amounted to confiscation, and though a nominal price was paid to the former owners, in the form of bonds or obligations, these sums paid were swallowed up by fees, duties, and special taxation imposed upon the former owners by the authorities.

The comparatively high prosperity of the peasant in Czechoslovakia has been attained with the help of high agrarian protective tariffs and by export-import prohibitions. This artificial protection in the interest of the agricultural stratum of the population could be effected only at the expense of the standard of living of the urban population.

The parts of the Austrian Empire which now constitute the territory of the Federal State of Austria contained a larger peasant class even before the war than the corresponding Bohemian or Moravian parts. When in 1921 the Catholic Clerical Christian Social Party took over the leadership in the Government, the influence of the peasant, who was the supporter of this party, increased accordingly. No land-reform measure was passed in Austria, but the already powerful and numerous peasant class were able to obtain privileges at the expense of the urban population.

In addition to their strong representation in Parliament, the Lower-Austrian Chamber of Agriculture was founded in February, 1922, and similar institutions followed in the other provinces. These Agriculture Chambers which were called into existence to protect in an increased measure agrarian interests were founded by Josef Reither, who for some years was Minister of Agriculture in the



Schuschnigg Government and is at present the leader of the Austrian Agricultural Corporation. His right hand in the creation of these Chambers was his secretary, Doctor Engelbert Dollfuss, later Chancellor of Austria. Dollfuss himself was of peasant extraction and remained until his tragic death an indomitable champion of the interest of that class in which he originated. His clear-cut and energetic policy (which naturally was highly disadvantageous to the town populace) aimed at the moral and material improvement of the peasants. As the Czech agriculturalists were helped with the aid of high tariffs on foreign agrarian produce, so the Austrian peasants obtained from Dollfuss high tariffs which were to keep the price of agricultural products as high as possible. The policy was consequently carried out from 1926, and since 1931 old trade treaties have been often suddenly abrogated to claim higher protection for this or that product of the land.

As result of the policy of Dollfuss, the peasants of the lowlands have profited enormously by these tariffs, but the lot of the mountain peasants remained pitiful. The chief export of the mountains was wood and timber, and the largest customer used to be Germany. But the Reich, ever since 1929, preferred to buy the cheap Russian timber, a policy which continued even under Hitler, despite the political antagonism to the system of rule in Soviet Russia. Dollfuss and Schuschnigg tried to help this anomaly by new trade treaties with Italy, Hungary, and France, and in February, 1937, the new trade treaty with Germany allotted a quota of about £670,000 per annum of additional export for Austrian dairy produce, cattle, horses, and timber.

Rumania was compelled to adopt a far-reaching agrarian reform to prevent the spread of Bolshevism amongst the landless proletariat. In 1917, Article 19 of the Constitution was amended in Jassy by inserting a clause containing provisions for a land reform. By a decree-law of 1918 the expropriation of the estates of the 'foreigners' and the division of the domains of the Rumanian owners began, this latter class obtaining compensation in the form of obligations payable in installments spread over forty years. Altogether fifteen million acres of land were expropriated. Of this ten million acres were arable, providing land for 630,000 families in Rumania proper, 310,000 in Transylvania, 357,000 in Bessarabia, and 71,000 in the Bukowina. In addition to this land reform, Agricultural Chambers were

founded all over the country for the more efficient representation of the interests of the peasantry.

The political influence of the Rumanian peasant has fluctuated during the last nineteen years. The so-called 'Liberal' Governments represented the industrial and banking interests. Peasant dissatisfaction reached such a point, as we have seen, that Rumania was brought to the verge of civil war by the peasants' threat to march on Bucharest in May, 1928. In November of the same year, the Regency was forced to call Julius Maniu, the Transylvanian peasant leader, to the helm of the country. From that date, until November, 1933 (with one year's interruption through Jorga's semi-dictatorial régime), the Peasant Party directed the fate of Rumanian politics. The Liberal Tatarescu Government which followed them has not dared to infringe on any of the privileges gained by the peasants during the last decade.

Only slightly did the lot of the peasant improve in Hungary. After the short-lived Bolshevik régime of Béla Kun in 1919, the Agrarians became the strongest party in the Hungarian Parliament; but after the death of the peasant leader, Stephen Szabó de Nagyatád, the feudal Premier, Count Bethlen, succeeded in breaking up the party organization of the peasants, and reduced them to an uninfluential wing of his own United Government Party. The land reform provided by a special law brought about the division of only a few estates, and the number of peasants who obtained land under this reform has not been very large, especially if compared with that in the neighbouring countries.

Julius Goemboes, Premier from October, 1932, until October, 1936, took into his programme a 'conservative' land reform. The Agrarian Party, on the other hand, has become the strongest party of the opposition and they clamour for land reform. Although Premier Darányi is a representative of the large landowners, the pressure of the Agrarian Opposition is so keen that nobody in Hungary can now neglect the claims of the Agrarian Party.

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia effected a far-reaching land reform back in the early years of her existence. More than three million acres of land were divided among the peasants, thereby benefiting three hundred and seventy thousand families. In politics, however, only the Croatian Peasant Party played an important rôle before the dictatorship. The attempts at reconciliation between Belgrade

and Zagreb have brought this party again into the foreground, while the influence of the Serbian Agrarian Party is growing only slowly. Economically the lot of the South-Slav peasant is, compared with the pre-war situation, much improved, especially in Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, where until 1918 a semi-serf system survived from the days of the Turkish rule.

Bulgaria was always a country of small holders, which made a land reform almost unnecessary. On the other hand, much marshy and hitherto uncultivated land has been reclaimed to help the settlement of tens of thousands of Macedonian refugees who were expelled from Greece and Serbia after the war. This settlement of refugees has been aided by a loan of the League of Nations. Under the Stambolisky régime, the Bulgarian peasants enormously benefited by the establishment of co-operatives, agricultural schools, research institutes, and so forth. Despite the White Terror which followed his murder in 1923, the Agrarians were able to retain most of the advantages gained under the 'Green Dictatorship.' In 1932, the once persecuted Agrarians entered the Muchanoff Government as partners in the Coalition. The *Putsch* of May 19, 1934, abolished parliamentary representation in Bulgaria, but the peasants retained their economic advantages. Moreover, the dictatorship proved to be a failure and the Kiosse-Ivanoff Government is seeking an understanding with the former Agrarian groups.

Albania has also adopted a thorough land reform during the last five years, and almost five thousand peasants and immigrants obtained land under this reform. King Zog I invited agricultural advisers into the country; he ordered the replacing of the primitive wooden ploughs by steel ones. The extension of schooling has also benefited the Albanian peasant.

In all these countries, the most important gain has been various agrarian reform laws by which the peasant obtained land. In the fourteen countries, already mentioned, plus Poland and the Baltic States, seventy million acres of land were divided amongst the peasants, representing eighteen and a half per cent of all available agricultural soil. Over two million new small holdings were created. No Government, however reactionary, has dared, or will dare to take this land away. The peasant class, almost unrepresented in politics before the war, has gained great influence in the direction of the political affairs of the respective States, though much of these gains

may have been later paralyzed by the establishment of Fascist or dictatorial Governments in these countries. But even these dictatorially ruled countries were compelled to take cognizance of the peasants. Unfortunately, in their anti-Socialist creed the peasants often became the ally of the dictators, or at least a factor silently tolerating the aims of the dictators.

This increased influence of the peasants holds in store for Europe both a promise and a threat. The promise is that this class, which before the war was a kind of serf, has become a stabilizing influence. Another promise is that even if today he supplies silent support for various dictators, the peasant remains at heart a democrat. This latent power in the peasantry may be helpful one day to restore democratic forms of government which the different dictatorships have tried to eradicate.

Navigating between capital on the one side and labour on the other, it appeared for some time that the peasant would have a decisive word in shaping the destinies of European society. But the peasant movement has an enormous drawback: the peasant masses cannot be organized, as, for example, labour was organized. After the war an endeavour was attempted to bring the peasants together in a Green International. The first meeting of this was in Passau in August, 1920. But because of the slow and conservative nature of the peasant the organization proceeded only with difficulties, and the world economic crisis dealt it a fatal blow.

At present the peasants are organized (if organized at all) on national lines. One of the threats of the Green rising is the jingo nationalism of the peasant. French nationalism, at bottom, is the nationalism of the French peasant who was brought to power by the French Revolution through the assistance of the Third Estate, though the peasant did not participate in the actual Revolution. And while the nationalist, thrifty, democratic, and yet suspicious French peasant is the real power even today in France, the same prospects may be envisaged in Central Europe as a result of the rise of the peasant. The provincial cultivator, who obtained land by the land reform, will remain intensely nationalist; though opposed to the banking magnates and to the industrial captains, he will continue to send his savings into the banks (very often to the Staviskys); also he will remain suspicious of the Socialist town proletariat. Though in his heart a pacifist, he easily can be convinced that his property is in

danger, or that it can be maintained only if the country has a strong army. And yet his land is more valuable to him than his life. . . . And if another serious world crisis comes, the peasant can be easily convinced that only a war can bring remedies, the more because in time of war the price of agricultural products rises and the value of his crops increases.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE DECAY OF FEUDALISM

THE Green rising had as its consequence the doom of Feudalism. The power of the aristocracy has naturally been fundamentally assailed ever since the French Revolution; the upheavals of 1918 and the fall of four empires in Europe did the rest.

At the height of its power the aristocracy, despite its vices, possessed certain virtues as well: it could boast a long tradition of rule; it was fundamentally patriarchal; it contributed much to the promotion of arts and literature; but unfortunately, its rule was based on tradition and on coercion which the rising modern ideas were bound to sweep away. It was the revolt of the town proletariat which had undermined the centuries' long privileges of this feudal class, but it was the peasant who benefited by it. The doom of the feudal class was clearly written on the wall with large red letters, but either these aristocrats had not paid enough attention to the approaching menace, or all their tenacity and craftiness proved insufficient in the face of ideas which shook the whole world.

The aristocrats of the old Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were divided into three groups, the centre of each group being Vienna, Budapest, or Prague, respectively. The aristocrats of Austria gave to the old Empire the highest dignitaries of the Imperial Courts as well as the foremost functionaries in the State. They were premiers, court chamberlains, governors of provinces, chefs-de-cabinet of the Emperor, foreign ministers, and high officials. Old Austria was run by these aristocratic families. They were financially independent, and received a good education; their financial independence was a guaranty against corruption.

As high State officials they were obliged to work during office hours, but in their leisure time they understood how to enjoy themselves. During the winter one spectacular reception or ball followed



PRINCE ERNST RUEDIGER STAHREMBERG

April, 1936: 'Only over my dead body will the *Heimwehr* be dissolved.'

October, 1936: The *Heimwehr* disbanded by the Schuschnigg government.  
Prince Stahremberg is in good health and lives a retired private life now.

another; in the summer they arranged horse shows and festive processions, while in the autumn an endless chain of hunting parties followed. Life was not only gay, but also luxurious, and receptions at the Kinskys' and at the Schwarzenbergs' were as fantastic as those of American millionaires. And yet the aristocrats in the old days were benefactors of art and letters, as well as of music; the Lobkowitz and Liechtenstein families were patrons of Beethoven; Count Wolfsegg helped Mozart, while the Princes Eszterhazy supported Haydn and Schubert.

Prague's aristocratic society was probably even more exclusive than that of Vienna. The magnificent palaces of the aristocrats stood in the narrow streets and hilly thoroughfares of the Mala Strana (Small Side) of Prague. Where once these aristocrats had their gorgeous receptions, today busy offices are housed, for most of these palaces were taken away by the Republic or were lost to the owners by the land reform in Czechoslovakia.

Thus the fine palace of the Count Kolowrats is now the seat of the Czechoslovak Prime Minister's office; the Czernin Palace houses the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; the magnificent Waldstein Palace is now the Ministry of Commerce; the palace of the Prince Fuerstenberg is the Ministry for Social Welfare; the Nostitz Palace is the seat of the Ministry of Education; the Thun Palace is the headquarters of the British Legation, the Schoenborn Palace that of the American Legation, and so forth.

In Hungary the feudal noblemen constituted the supreme power for ages. It was calculated that of the pre-war eighteen million inhabitants (without Croatia) about seven hundred thousand belonged to the gentry class, of whom about thirty-five hundred were aristocrats or bishops. While the aristocrats and bishops were large landowners, the so-called gentry possessed only small estates or no land, but they constituted the army of civil servants. In 1914 there were three hundred and fifteen thousand five hundred officials in Hungary, mostly recruited from the ranks of the gentry, and the rest of the nobility served in the army or provided the officers in the gendarmerie and police, as well as the officials in the country and municipal services. Out of the sixty million acres of available land in Hungary, nineteen million acres were in the hands of two and a half million small holders (their possessions never exceeding fifty acres), while nearly nineteen million acres of land — that is thirty-one per cent of



the total — was owned by about four thousand estates (all larger than twenty-five hundred acres each), and were in the hands of about two thousand landowners, mostly aristocrats. Many of these large estates in Hungary were entailed, and in the years previous to the Great War about twelve million more acres became entailed. While the agrarian proletariat lived in the greatest poverty, the feudal lords lived in plenty and luxury. Though the Magyar aristocrats liked to make frequent trips to Vienna and participate in the elegant life of the Imperial Court, at home they also developed their own society, having their town palaces mostly in the district near the National Museum.

All nobility — German, Czech, Polish, and Hungarian — showed signs of decay. Many jokes were based on the stock low comedy figure of the degenerate aristocrat. Count Bobby and Count Aristide were as familiar characters in pre-war comedy as Pat and Mike in America. They were pictured as foolish, good-natured, and utterly without any conception of the realities of the day. This picture was, of course, intentionally distorted. Bobby and Aristide actually were often simple, very often quarrelsome, childish, but never without a sense of humour. Probably the most interesting figure of the post-war aristocrats was Count Adalbert Sternberg, or, as his friends called him, 'Monchi.'

The career of Count Adalbert reveals none of those foolish inconsistencies which Emerson describes as the 'hobgoblins of little minds.' He was proud of his Czech origin, and forty years ago he was elected to the Austrian Parliament on a Czech oppositional platform. He fought the Viennese first as a Czech Nationalist, and later as an anti-Republican, but he himself was the prototype of the Viennese. The whole Austrian nobility felt the keen edge of his tongue; and he was the only man who, before the war openly and privately dared to insult the Habsburg name. Once he called the aged Emperor Francis Joseph an 'old idiot.'

But when the Habsburgs were driven away in 1918, the gallant Count changed his colours. From their bitterest critic he became their most eloquent defender. Emptying whisky glasses in the Sacher bar, he insulted his fellow aristocrats, this time for deserting their Emperor. Courtiers who had basked in the sun of the Imperial Court, he said, had been the first to renounce their benefactors. He called the Republican Government hypocritical and corrupt.

After the Republic, of which Doctor Karl Renner was the first Chancellor, had abolished all titles, Count Adalbert's visiting cards read:

'Adalbert Sternberg, ennobled by Charlemagne—de-titled by Karl Renner.'

The Magyar aristocrats, with enormous domains, lived an even more frivolous life than their Austrian or Czech comrades. One of the Princes Eszterhazy decorated his *Diszmagyar* (the national costume of the Hungarian aristocrats) with thousands of pounds' worth of diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. Prince Tassilo Festetics, when coming to the races in Vienna, travelled in a private train. Count Paul Eszterhazy, once brought a famous Budapest gipsy band by special train to Marienbad to please King Edward VII, who had mentioned to him how much he had enjoyed its music in Budapest.

Riotous life, wine, women, gambling, however, were slowly eating up the estates of many of the Hungarian feudal lords, and a serious crisis of the gentry had been experienced in the eighties of the past century. Another crisis, however, came at the end of the Great War. The new régimes in the territories which Hungary lost to her neighbours confiscated the estates of the Magyar nobility and dismissed the Hungarian gentry from Government posts which they held. The new régime established in Hungary by the Counter-Revolution of 1919 tried to place these aristocrats in positions in industry and commerce which had formerly been left to the foreigners and the Jews. Today the boards of directors of the large banks and industries in Hungary are resplendent with ancient names. Their incomes from these sources, however, are not large enough to support the aristocrats in the life to which they have been accustomed. And because of the low prices of agricultural products the aristocrats have been forced to sell some of their land to thrifty peasants—in the only country in Southeastern Europe where land reform (at least on a sweeping scale) has not been carried through. Thus, even amongst the Magyar aristocrats in Hungary proper, there are only a few who today are still immensely rich.

The chief cause of the decay of the feudal noblemen in Czechoslovakia was the Czechoslovak land reform and the low price of timber products caused by the competition of Russian lumber on the world market. Though the very thorough land reform constituted a tremendous blow to these aristocrats in Prague, nevertheless, some

of the nobility in Czechoslovakia managed at least to maintain an existence by a more intensive method of management and cultivation of their remaining estates.

A certain amount of aristocratic social splendour does survive in Prague. Aristocratic society in the Czech capital still arranges receptions and balls, though the ancient glory of pre-war times exists no longer. The Pardubic races are still a great occasion, and some of the hunting parties continue to be famous. But the aristocratic political influence has completely ceased. The nobility in Czechoslovakia is divided into two groups: a Czech and a German aristocracy. Yet even the Czech aristocrats, such as the Lobkovitz, Silva-Taroucca, Korinsky, Chotek, Thun, and other families, have separated themselves from those who are ruling the Czechoslovak Republic. From the beginning, they have considered the present rulers boorish and devoid of all aristocratic traditions. Moreover, their deeply religious Roman Catholic faith had also separated them from the new governing class, which, especially in the early days of the Republic, followed 'Hussite tendencies.' Though good relations between present rulers and the Vatican have been re-established through the *modus vivendi* concluded some years ago, the cleavage between the Czech aristocracy and the present governing class has remained. Only a few young aristocrats in Czechoslovakia have condescended to join the diplomatic service of the new Republic.

On the other hand, the pressure caused by the original land reform has been eased, and today a number of Czech aristocrats can claim to be at least fairly well off, though their property cannot even be mentioned on the same day with their pre-war wealth and luxury.

There has been no land reform in Austria since the war. A law to curtail the entailed estates exists, but only on paper. Immediately after the war it appeared as if the aristocratic class would be able to recover its ancient power in Austria, because inflation or, rather, the fall of the krone, wiped out their heavy debts. But later on the competition of Hungarian agrarian products brought them into a new difficult position, though Dollfuss's agrarian protective tariff policy has caused a slight recovery in their ranks recently. But others amassed new debts; while those landowners whose domains consisted mostly of forests suffered, like their Czechoslovak brothers, from the ruinous competition of cheap Russian timber.

The political influence of these aristocrats has also been greatly

reduced all over Danubia. In Austria Ernst Ruediger Prince von Starhemberg for several years played a leading rôle in politics as the commander of the Fascist *Heimwehr* and as Vice-Chancellor in the Schuschnigg Government; but since the dissolution of the *Heimwehr* in October, 1936, Starhemberg has retired into private life. Here and there a few aristocrats held positions in the Austrian semi-Fascist administration (for instance, Count Rudolf Hoyos, who is the Speaker of the pseudo-Parliament of Fascist Austria), but these Government posts are often compensations because the estates no longer yield sums which would enable these noblemen even to exist.

In Hungary, as we have seen, Count Bethlen represented the landowning class during the ten years of his premiership, but their influence decreased rapidly when in 1932 the landless gentry took over the power, headed by Goemboes. The late Premier Goemboes accepted as the mainstay of his programme the agrarian reform which displeased the feudal landlords. But Premier Darányi, his successor, though he promises land reform, is clandestinely a friend of the landowning class by tradition. His uncle, Ignacz von Darányi, was the famous supporter of the organization of the Magyar landowners, and the nephew is certainly not so eager to realize land reform as was his landless predecessor.

We saw that in Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia alike, no matter how different the régimes, all are compelled to court the peasant, who is regarded as the backbone of the State. And this all plays directly against the interests of his former masters, the landed nobility.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE MOVEMENTS OF THE LEFT

THE end of the Great War found the world split into three camps: the victors, the defeated, and the neutral. In Central Europe this division into three camps occurred in a slightly altered form: it was possible to distinguish between the satisfied and dissatisfied victors and the vanquished. The consequences of a devastating war were felt more here than in Western Europe. Two of the defeated empires, Germany and Turkey, were on the periphery of the territory which I am discussing, and a third empire, the Russian, which was actually not defeated in battle, but brought to revolution by internal disruption, was an immediate neighbour, while in the very heart of this territory the most ancient of these monarchies, the Habsburg Empire, had disintegrated.

All four of these empires passed through a period of revolution which was the inevitable consequence of military collapse or of exhaustion. A fifth monarchy, Italy, one of the 'dissatisfied' victors, was passing through difficult years. Amongst the smaller defeated countries, Bulgaria had driven away its former king, Ferdinand I, and his son could ascend the throne of his father only by the toleration of the peasant leader, Stambolisky, who came to power in the wake of a revolution caused by the defeat.

On the other hand, none of the greater 'satisfied' victors were near to these parts, France and Great Britain being divided from Central Europe by a belt of neutral countries. The smaller 'satisfied' victors, such as the newly created Poland and Czechoslovakia, Rumania — Greater Rumania — as well as Serbia, now enlarged to a mighty Yugoslavia, were too weak and too exhausted to play a really dominating rôle in shaping the future of the defeated nations, now in the process of revolutionary ferment.

In Russia the Soviet Revolution obtained power a year prior to

the general collapse in Central Europe, and half-consolidated in her might at home, Soviet Russia tried to influence the fate of Central Europe. The auguries seemed to be not entirely unfavourable as to the future success of this Bolshevik thrust. Four years of war had sapped not only the remarkable power of resistance of the German people, but the lack of foodstuffs and clothing had seriously undermined the morale, the physical strength, and bodily health of the population of the new German Republic. Vienna went through four years of semi-starvation, and in consequence of the mutilation of the former Austrian Empire all grain-supplying parts of the former Habsburg Monarchy were now in the hands of the 'victorious' Succession States (except Hungary), which meant that the Austrian capital was facing a period of starvation much worse than those she had had to endure in the past.

Immediately after the war ended, Central Europe was largely in the hands of Socialists. Thus, at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919, there was a Socialist Government in Vienna, headed by the able and highly intelligent Chancellor, Karl Renner; in Budapest the Socialists possessed some of the most important portfolios in the Karolyi Government; while Social Democracy took an active part in the fight for Czech freedom, and provided, after participating in the first Government of the Republic, the first Prime Minister of the Czechoslovak State after the elections: Vlastimil Tusar. But while these clever and efficient Social Democratic leaders attempted to induce the dissatisfied masses to express their wishes through the legal channels of parliamentary democracy, Bolshevik agitators were haranguing the crowds everywhere against their Marxist brethren. It was due to the strength and discipline of the Social Democrats in Central Europe that a process of 'bolshevization' had been prevented in Austria and Czechoslovakia; Otto Bauer's radical policy was probably the best counterpoise against the Communist menace, while in Czechoslovakia, besides Tusar and the other Social Democratic leaders, the non-Marxist Socialist, Benes, during his premiership, warded off the danger of a planned Communist *coup*. If in Hungary, whose people are more temperamental and less disciplined than those of Austria and Czechoslovakia, Bolshevism could establish itself, it was only for a short time, and only because the representative of the Supreme Council of Versailles bungled the possibilities of a normal and peaceful development.

Next to the complete failure of the Supreme Council to understand the necessity of supporting these democratic, if even socialistic-inspired, Governments, the boundless Communist agitation in these parts must be made responsible for the failure to establish liberal democracy in Mid-Europe (including Italy), and thus their foolish, and in the end hopeless, efforts brought about the birth of Fascist reaction.

No one who has not lived through those days in Central Europe can form an idea of the pressure which Bolshevik Russia exercised on these countries by money, propaganda, and persuasion. Twice in 1919 the Vienna police had to use its firearms, causing heavy losses on both sides, to put down Communist *Putsch* attempts. Tens of thousands of pounds were spent in Austria to 'buy up' leaders for the purposes of such a Communist *Putsch*. Repeatedly were the cobblestones of Budapest coloured red by the blood of Socialist policemen and Communist rioters. And as the news services broke down almost completely, the Bolsheviks were able to disseminate rumours which were favourable to their cause. For example, one day Budapest was burning with excitement over the rumour that Bolshevik troops had occupied Tarnopol, a town in the former Galician province of the Austrian Empire, only a few hundred miles distant from Vienna, Prague, and Budapest. The Hungarian Social Democrat, Wilhelm Boehm, who accepted a position as People's Commissar in the Béla Kun régime, has described in his memoirs the hysterical atmosphere in Budapest in those days:

A veritable mass hysteria had taken possession of the country. The Communists arranged mass meetings, organized armed demonstrations. In the streets of the capital artificially excited smaller and larger groups, threatening armed revolt and pogroms, disquieted the life of the city. The mass hysteria penetrated into the factories and workshops, had extended to the labourers in the field — production was hampered and the whole society was aching in a fever. The bourgeois press increased the chaos by spreading alarming rumours which only increased this mass hysteria. . . .

Imagine the situation of the Austrian Social-Democratic Government in the first half of 1919. Since the end of March, a Bolshevik régime had been established in neighbouring Hungary; since April there had been a Soviet Government in near-by Munich. Money

was pouring into Vienna from Budapest for the purposes of Communist propaganda; but this propaganda was directed, not against reactionary, feudal, or bourgeois régimes, but against honest and progressive Social-Democratic Governments which differed from the Communists, not in doctrines, but only in refusing to employ terror, ruthless propaganda, and bribery in attaining their aims. They intended to establish democratic and parliamentary régimes instead of bloodthirsty dictatorships.

Besides the Bolsheviks, there were other extreme Left elements in Vienna who tried to outbid the most radical of the Socialists. These extremist elements often came from the ranks of the intelligentsia; and probably the most picturesque amongst them was the talented writer and journalist, Egon Erwin Kisch. He organized Red Guards from the ranks of the disbanded soldiers. Even in these difficult days, however, Vienna was able to keep her *Gemuetlichkeit*, and Kisch's most daring attempt is alleged to have ended in ridicule. The *Neue Freie Presse*, then the leading paper of Vienna, was regarded by the Communists as the prototype of the vile middle-class newspaper. Egon Kisch, therefore, decided to make an armed raid on it. But somehow the rumours of his planned *coup* reached the editorial offices of the paper where, by strange coincidence, Egon's own brother Paul was one of the editors. A frightened editorial conference sent Paul to negotiate with Egon, as the Roman Senate once entrusted Volumnia with pacifying her enraged son Coriolanus who was leading enemy troops against Rome. Paul Kisch awaited the arrival of the Red Guards at the corner of the Fichtegasse where the editorial offices of the *Neue Freie Presse* are still to be found. Paul, however, did not plead with the eloquence of Volumnia, but raised his finger menacingly, and said:

'Egon, Egon, you turn back as quick as you can, or I will tell Mother!'

Paul swears that these magic words induced Egon to retire.

It was on February 15, 1919, that I arrived from Great Britain on Central European soil. My first experiences were the riots of the Left groups in Germany and their clashes either with the police or with other armed organizations. I saw Spartacist riots in Berlin, and when a few days later I arrived in Munich, there was fierce fighting between Spartacists and the police. When on February 21, I reached the Austro-Bavarian frontier at Passau, I learned that on the same day



the Left Socialist Prime Minister of Bavaria, Kurt Eisner, had been murdered in Munich by the Counter-Revolutionary Count Arco.

After some days' waiting in Passau, I got on a train which ran once a week from Passau to Vienna, and which consisted of freight cars, plus one third-class passenger car. I managed to get into the crowded car, and found myself jammed between a group of *Schieber* and *Schmuggler* — shovers and smugglers — whose task was to smuggle foodstuffs from Bavaria to starving Vienna. Persons in the Austrian capital who wanted to prevent their families from perishing by starvation often went as far as Bavaria to bring back food enough for a week or so. They left Vienna with rucksacks jammed with strange wares, and the rucksack was again bulging on the return journey, this time with food. The secret of the full bags on the outward journey was that in those days money was of no value. The currencies of war-shaken and defeated Europe were tumbling rapidly, which, in turn, made the peasants distrust paper money. Gold, on the other hand, was unavailable. But four years of war had depleted the wardrobe of the peasant, and anybody who was the lucky owner of old worn-out trousers, overcoats, bed linen or table linen, and so forth, could consider himself wealthy in the provinces. The peasant bartered his foodstuffs against these old textiles. Even foreign money, including that of the victorious Western Powers, was distrusted. I had plenty of English pounds in my pocket, but no one wished to sell foodstuffs in exchange for them. If I did not starve on the thirty-six hours' (now five hours') journey from Passau to Vienna, this was due solely to the 'golden Vienna heart' of my smuggler companions in the carriage, who offered me, without accepting any compensation, their smuggled bacon and ham and cheese.

How can I make Anglo-Saxons, who never had to suffer such inconveniences, visualize the terror of a railway journey in those days? The carriage had no windows, no lamps. Even some of the wooden seats had been torn away, and some of us had to sit on the wooden framework or on our luggage. Since it was February, it was freezing outside, and the windowless carriage soon assumed the temperature of the outside world. Like the Eskimos we had to keep together to keep warm — luckily the carriage was crowded — and we had to rub our hands and feet to prevent them from freezing. Customs examinations followed each other in quick succession. Besides the

Austro-Bavarian frontier we were held up and examined at various stations in Upper Austria. These customs officials were in quest of food. All rural districts of Central Europe were anxious to keep their food products within their own territory, and wished to prevent exportation, lest even worse days should come. But though everybody, except me, in my carriage was smuggling food, the kind-hearted frontier officials always asked *me* to open my bag, apparently sizing me up as no smuggler and wanting to leave the others undisturbed.

The last examination, I remember well, was at Saint Valentin, on the border of the provinces of Upper and Lower Austria. A sigh of relief passed across the carriage when the coughing engine started to puff away from the derelict station. Suddenly the whole carriage was in a state of agitation and quick transformation. The cold might be devastating to the human cargo of the carriage, but it was beneficial to the smuggled meat and butter. From the slots into which the windows of the carriage could once be lowered, busy hands fished out beans, lentils, and peas; huge hams and flitches of bacon were drawn out either from rucksacks or from beneath the seats; while a young woman, with a pleasant face but somewhat too round figure, started to undress. From beneath her skirt she untied large pieces of ham and bacon. Each clever smuggling idea was received with loud laughter or other expression of approval. The passengers, freed from the worry that their booty might be confiscated, now broke into a cheery song typical of those days:

*'Wer wird jetzt die Strassen kehren?  
Wer wird jetzt die Strassen kehren?  
Das sind die Herren,  
Mit den goldenen Stern'n,  
Die werden jetzt die Strassen kehren.'*

*'Who shall sweep the streets?  
Those gentlemen,  
With the golden stars,  
They shall sweep the streets.'*

The 'gentlemen with the golden stars' were the officers of the Imperial Austrian Army whose rank was denoted by gold or silver stars on their collars. The anti-war feeling of the masses was reflected in this song. Conversations with different people in the carriage gave

me an idea of the intense revolutionary feeling which still prevailed in Austria three and a half months after the outbreak of the Revolution.

Even in victorious Czechoslovakia, Communist propaganda found ample soil to take root; the new possessors of power had taken over a highly impoverished heritage, for their people had been exhausted and exploited in the four years of the war. But the situation was worst in Hungary. There, it is true, there had been no starvation during the war. But the conservative Magyar peasant's distrust of the progressive middle classes in the towns, and even more of the Socialists, the groups in power in the towns, made him reluctant to supply the towns with food. But while it took four years of starvation to rouse the Austrian proletariat to revolutionary fever heat, four months of hunger was sufficient to revolutionize the Hungarian town workers.

I arrived in the Hungarian capital at the very end of February, 1919, and was thus able to witness the last weeks of the Karolyi régime. On March 21, I was sitting with some colleagues and friends when the editor of a Hungarian Liberal organ rushed into the room and shouted:

'A Bolshevik régime has been established in Budapest!'

He went on to describe to us the events I have already narrated in my chapter on Hungary: the formation of the Kunfi-Béla Kun Government after Karolyi had resigned in protest against the impossible demands of the Entente as delivered by Colonel Vyx. We all jumped up as one man and rushed to study the situation. Budapest remained comparatively calm. For the first few weeks of the Kun régime, the bourgeoisie, though frightened, were satisfied with the solution, and hoped that the Communist régime would bring relief to the badly mutilated country. 'It serves the Entente right,' a professor at the technical high school (who later on became a prominent counter-revolutionary) told me, 'it serves them right! Now we will show them! Is this better now?' And he rubbed his hands.

The old story was once more repeated. What Count Karolyi, the democrat, with all his pleadings and pledges could not obtain from Versailles, namely, that, instead of their listening to one-sided and biassed experts in Paris, they should send an investigation committee to Hungary, the Bolshevik Government obtained immediately. A fortnight after the establishment of the Kun régime, the South African statesman, General Smuts, arrived in Budapest, sent by the Supreme Council.

The Socialist-Communist coalition in Budapest had to begin its work under impossibly difficult circumstances. The Rumanians occupied by armed force the demarcation line mentioned in the Vyx note, and secretly they intended to penetrate far beyond this line, if possible: right to the Tisza River. The counter-revolutionary counts from their exile abroad encouraged this intervention, and on April 16, 1919, the Rumanian troops attacked the Hungarian vanguards. The People's Commissars in Budapest addressed a proclamation to the people, declaring that against this attack of the international bourgeoisie only the united Socialist proletariat could offer resistance, and calling the workers to arms. But it was a long task to organize the new Red Army, and in the meantime the Rumanians were steadily advancing, nowhere meeting serious resistance.

A Socialist officer of the former Imperial Army, Colonel Aurel Stromfeld, was entrusted with the work of organizing the entire defence. He worked with great zeal, but it was impossible to create an army out of the void. While the first of May was celebrated by gaudy festivities and great pomp, as Kun had seen done in Moscow, the military situation became catastrophic, and on May 2 the insufficiently trained forces were once more defeated by the Rumanians. But Stromfeld continued the organization of the army, and soon new troops were ready to be thrown into the front lines to strengthen the defence, but also prepared even for a possible offensive movement. Red Hungary was surrounded on three sides by seventeen army corps of the Entente, some of these troops being French, in the south and east the Rumanians and in the north the Czechs, under French and Italian command. As soon as the Rumanian offensive was brought to a standstill, Stromfeld decided to attack the weakest of all the assembled forces, the Czechoslovaks. During the night of May 19 he launched the attack, and in a fortnight Northern Hungary (the present Slovakia) was cleared of the occupying Czech army. On June 13 Clemenceau made a binding promise to the Hungarian Soviet Government that if the Hungarians would evacuate the occupied Slovakian territory, the Rumanian troops would be withdrawn. The Hungarian Soviet Government accepted the offer — and they were betrayed!

This betrayal (which was not the first and not the last) as well as many other factors undermined the morale of the already tired troops, and a new disintegration of the Red Army began. At home,

serious quarrels arose between Socialists and Communists within the Government, because Kun pushed into all responsible positions his Communist friends, who, though they may have had some experience in Russia, did not understand the Hungarian town workers or peasants. The Kun régime could have been a much more successful experiment if more power had been left to the experienced People's Commissars, who came from the Social Democratic ranks, such as Wilhelm Boehm, Peter Agoston, S. Kunfi, and Anton Dovcsak.

The Social Democratic Stromfeld resigned in protest against the impossible and dishonest policy of Kun. The Socialists in the Cabinet were worn out, and when Boehm, the Minister in Vienna, was offered negotiations by Sir Thomas Cunningham, the military representative of Great Britain in Vienna, the Social Democrats in Budapest were ready to start such *pourparlers*. On July 24 the negotiations began and Sir Thomas offered in the name of the representatives of the Entente the following conditions: A dictatorial Government should take over the power from Kun who should be removed from the Cabinet; Bolshevism should be abandoned and all Communist propaganda stopped; and all terror should be abolished. In exchange for the acceptance of these conditions the Entente promised to recognize and help a Social Democratic Government in which representatives of the middle classes should also find seats, and, further, to abolish the blockade and to send food and coal to Hungary.

The Social Democrats were willing to accept these conditions, and under the weight of the promises of the Entente they encouraged the dissolution of the Socialist troop formations at the front which were the backbone of the resistance. The success of the Rumanian offensive, which inflicted a decisive defeat on the Reds at Czegléd on July 31, was only possible because the Socialists ceased to fight. Less than twenty-four hours after the Czegléd defeat, Kun and some other Communist People's Commissars left clandestinely by train for Vienna. So hurried was their departure that many decent Socialists, and even Communists, were not informed about the impending collapse, and were caught in Budapest. Many of these, like the Assistant Commissar of the Interior, Otto Korvin-Klein, paid with their lives for Kun's betrayal.

The Social Democrats then formed their government; but, as we shall see in a later chapter, despite Cunningham's pledges, they were

soon ousted by a handful of White officers who enjoyed the protection of the bayonets of the Rumanian forces, then in actual occupation of Budapest.

The Béla Kun régime in Hungary collapsed after less than five months because it was bound to collapse. An English friend asked Béla Kun whether he thought it possible to keep in existence a Communist Hungary in the midst of a capitalist Europe? Whereupon Kun answered: 'Can Capitalist Europe continue to exist in face of the existence of a Communist Hungary in its heart?' This utterance, childish and hypocritical, shows how devoid was Béla Kun's experiment of all serious basis.

Béla Kun was a strange person, undoubtedly possessing great gifts, but probably even greater faults. He was from the Transylvanian parts of former Hungary, originating from a family of Jewish descent, but neither in his speech nor in his manners did he possess any of the characteristics attributed to his race in those parts. He was an official of the workers' insurance company in Kolozsvár (now Cluj, Transylvania), and had no distinguished record until after the war. Under the general conscription system of the old Monarchy he served in the army, and was captured on the Russian front. As a prisoner of war in Russia he witnessed the outbreak of the Revolution, and when released from the internment camp, he joined the Bolsheviks. Lenin recognized Kun's oratorical and demagogic abilities, and in November, 1918, he was sent to Hungary to organize the Bolshevik Revolution. Kun arrived in Budapest on November 16, 1918, and from the moment of his arrival his presence in the Hungarian capital was a great handicap to the bourgeois-Radical-Socialist coalition. Though already in the camp of Karolyi there were many unscrupulous agitators, like the journalist Josef Pógany, Kun had outbidden all demagogues. He preached hatred and annihilation of the bourgeoisie as well as of the Social Democrats. Kun's agitation culminated in the senseless attack on the editorial offices of the *Népszava*, the organ of the Hungarian Social Democrats. A huge crowd, consisting of disbanded soldiers and unemployed workers, attacked the editorial building whereupon the police were compelled to shoot. There were many dead and wounded, amongst them seven policemen, who were killed in the service of a Socialist Government by a mob harangued by Bolshevik agitators.

After this street fighting, Kun was arrested. The police, enraged

by the killing of their comrades, beat him up, which was a mistake: first, because it is wrong to beat a prisoner; and second, because it is foolish to make a martyr out of a demagogue. Soviet agitators grossly exaggerated and capitalized their chief's wounds. It is true that he was badly beaten up — but no worse than is the usual custom of the Budapest police with those who cause them trouble. He was kept in prison for one month; after which he left jail to become Dictator of Hungary.

I saw Kun shortly after his release. He looked healthy, but because of his head wounds, his skull was shaved, which made his broad face look even more brutal than normally. Kun was not good-looking, but certainly not as ugly as many photographs made him out. His face, especially in the days of his dictatorship, was absolutely the Tatar type, with strong cheekbones, a large mouth, and stump nose. The eyes were small; they appeared to be cunning and clever. He was middle-sized and broad-shouldered, and gesticulated vividly with his large hands as he spoke. On the ordinary neutral observer, Kun was bound to make a bad impression, for he appeared impudent and domineering. But what seemed impudent to the neutral observer appealed to the masses: his influence on the people was enormous. His appearance in days when gloom and despondency were beginning to capture the hearts of most of his ordinary followers always brought new hopes to the masses. I listened to him repeatedly when he spoke to intelligent workers in and near Budapest. When I entered one of these meetings, I found an atmosphere decidedly hostile to the régime. Then suddenly Kun came in, mounted on a barrel or on a box and started to speak. His speech, judged by an intellectual, was empty and consisted of phrases a hundred times repeated (almost as automatically as Hitler's) and yet the workers' faces began to change, and half an hour of Kun's demagoguery could convince the workers that the fight for the fate of the proletariat must go on. Even though he often promised nonsensical things, such as that Lenin would send his armies in defence of the Hungarian Soviet Republic (which his intelligent audience must have realized was eye-wash), yet each of his appearances was crowned with success. Lenin certainly possessed a sort of mass-mesmerism as do Hitler and Mussolini, and from personal experience I know that Kun could boast the same quality.

Kun's personality would be an interesting study for the psycho-

analyst, for his chief characteristics, impudence and brutality, were compensation for his immense cowardice and sentimentality. Kun, like Hitler, often broke into weeping fits; in days of distress he wept bitterly in presence of his most intimate collaborators. He was a coward. On June 24, 1919, a counter-revolution broke out in Budapest. Some of the Danube monitors who had joined the counter-revolutionaries bombarded the Soviet House (the Hotel Hungaria which had been converted into the headquarters of the Government). Kun was in the hotel when the first shots were fired. But he immediately fled to the army headquarters, and handed over the rule to Julius Alpári, a shrewd and able journalist. Only when he heard that the revolt was defeated did he return at nightfall to Budapest, accompanied by a trusted armed guard.

I saw Kun some years later in Vienna, this time as a prisoner. He had come back under an assumed name to organize Bolshevik activities. But he was discovered and tried before a Vienna law court before which he defended himself with his usual ability and impudence. Through his lawyer I asked him what mistake of his régime in Hungary he considered the gravest. His answer was: "That I promised that the heads of ten thousand aristocrats should roll, and that I did not keep my promise!"

This utterance brings us to the question of the terror exercised during the proletarian dictatorship. The bourgeois papers abroad heralded the existence of the worst terror campaign in the history of the world, and declared that no member of the Magyar aristocracy or of the middle classes was spared from its ravages. But this impression was entirely false. It is, of course, still disputable whether this terror would have remained as limited as it was if the honest Social Democrats in the Soviet Government had not checked it efficiently. We know that after his fall in Hungary Kun was sent to the Crimea and that the terror which he developed there was so cruel and senseless that it brought on him the wrath of Lenin. But fortunately the civilized and intelligent Socialists in the Kun Government placed a brake on Kun's activities, and, if all cruelties could not be avoided, they were certainly reduced to a minimum.

Jurisdiction during the Bolshevik régime in Hungary was placed in the hands of the so-called Revolutionary Tribunals, very much on the pattern of the French Revolution, and also somewhat after the Russian example. If these tribunals brought death sentences, they were probably justified from the revolutionary point of view. The



worst part of the terror, however, was exercised, not by these ordinary Revolutionary Tribunals, but by some groups which came into existence rather as an effect of post-war lawlessness and sometimes with the clandestine toleration of Kun.

Two such terror groups were famous: the 'Cserny Boys' and the Revolutionary Tribunal of Szamuely. Josef Cserny was a young man of twenty-six years, completely unknown in the Hungarian labour movement. He served as a soldier during the war and was captured on the Russian front. He came from Russia to Budapest and became a member of the armed guards of the Communist Party. As the army was disintegrating, Cserny and some of his mates succeeded in collecting lots of weapons, among them a dozen mine-throwers, three pieces of heavy artillery, several batteries of light artillery, one hundred thirty boxes full of hand-grenades, and about a dozen motor-cars and motor-lorries.

Cserny and his terrorists introduced on their own initiative a terror system such as they had learned in Russia. The Cserny Boys were dressed in leather trousers and leather coats ('because it's easier to wash the blood off them after executions,' they boasted); they wore a rifle on the shoulder and four hand-grenades on their belt. When they left the pompous Batthanyi Palace (a replica of the Strozzi Palace in Florence), which they had chosen as their headquarters, their motor-car gave a continued alarm by means of a loud siren, while six terrorists stood upright in the open car. Speeding at sixty miles an hour through the deserted streets of Budapest, the car, shrieking with the murderous-looking terrorists on it, was sufficient to drive terror into the soul. During the first weeks of the régime, these terrorists penetrated into bourgeois houses and requisitioned foodstuffs and sometimes also clothing. After the Rumanian attack on Hungary, they introduced the senseless system of taking hostages. Everybody was in torture when the loud hoots of the Cserny cars were heard in the streets. Hundreds of people were dragged every night into the prisons of the law court buildings in the Markó-utca, where they were kept overnight, sometimes for two or three days, and only rarely for some weeks.

These scores of aristocratic families and middle-class persons, crowded together in the big room of the law court, guarded by dirty and shabbily dressed Red soldiers, were naturally terrified. The Cserny Boys occasionally permitted some rude jokes. Suddenly one heard the reports of firearms in the courtyard, and some minutes

later two of the Cserny Boys would walk in, usually with blood-stained handkerchiefs in their hands. 'Twelve more of these beasts exterminated,' one terrorist would remark to the other, with apparent casualness. And when next day these hostages were released, they whispered to their friends that still more bourgeois had been executed last night. Naturally there had been no execution; it was only part of the system of driving fear into the hearts of the prisoners.

The Social-Democratic town commander of Budapest, the iron-turner Josef Haubrich, however, had enough of these activities of the Cserny Boys. And when he heard that some murders had actually been committed lately by this group, Haubrich ordered them to the front, and when they arrived, they were disarmed.

Szamuely's terror activity was rather more restricted to the provinces. It was bloodthirsty and wild, but, it must be said, it was directed mostly against active counter-revolutionaries, many of whom were captured with guns in their hands. There were counter-revolutionary outbreaks, not only in Budapest, but also in Duna-Pataj, Kalocsa, and in many places between the Danube and Tisza Rivers, as well as in Transdanubia, and Szamuely, with his quickly moving armed group, first tried to suppress the counter-revolution by fighting it, and then he established quick-working Revolutionary Tribunals. These Tribunals were often cruel and merciless, and were apt only to increase the already great dissatisfaction of the peasantry. The Socialists started their campaign against Szamuely, but alas, it was too late! When the Kun régime collapsed, Szamuely's dead body was found near the Austro-Hungarian frontier. Allegedly he committed suicide.

Despite all this the Red Terror in Hungary had comparatively few victims. After the fall of the Bolshevik régime the White Public Prosecutor could give a figure of two hundred thirty-four victims, but this also included those who were executed by the legal Revolutionary Tribunals, or those who fell in civil war, with arms in their hands. By including many people who died natural deaths during that period, or were killed by stray bullets during the civil war, he managed to increase this figure to five hundred eighty-seven. But after careful calculation the total number of terror murders was apparently not higher than one hundred sixty. This in five months' time! If one considers the several thousand victims of the White Terror which followed the Red this is not a high figure, regrettable and inexcusable as these lawless acts may have been.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE WORK OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC RÉGIME IN VIENNA

THE most popular man in Vienna today, I dare assert, is Karl Seitz, Mayor of Vienna until he was imprisoned on February 12, 1934, to be amnestied only at the end of 1936. Once I had occasion to walk with him through the streets of Vienna. It was little short of an ordeal, for almost everybody greeted him with reverence, and according to the Vienna custom I also had to raise my hat to each of his greeters. This popularity he owes, besides his charming personality, to the fact that he was the visible head and symbol of the Vienna Municipality which under the Social-Democratic era successfully carried out one of the most promising experiments in social reform ever attempted by any Government.

Karl Seitz, though a Socialist by party standing and by conviction, is the born type of a *grand seigneur*. There is something elegant in his upright figure (despite his sixty-seven years), in his firm and steady gait, in the look of his clever steel-blue eyes. His face is not unlike Masaryk's; and it is not only the drooping moustache and small beard which cause this resemblance. The expression of the steel-grey-blue eyes of the two statesmen, who incidentally before the war sat in the same Parliament on the same Opposition benches, is almost similar, though Masaryk's manner is probably more direct and austere.

Karl Seitz, like Masaryk, was reared in poverty. His father, a timber merchant, died when Seitz was only a small child; and his mother was forced to place him in an orphanage. In those days orphans were not permitted to attend colleges or even the better schools, hence he was apprenticed to a craft. Only once in his childhood did there seem to be a glimpse of hope for a distinguished career; for the orphanage put his name on a list of the twenty chil-

dren who each year were chosen to become members of the Boy Singers' Choir at the cloister of Klosterneuburg. These choir boys were, as a rule, given an education; and most of them, after completing their school, became members of the Benedictine Monastery at Klosterneuburg. For the small orphan boy this was the chance of a lifetime, because his dream was to obtain proper education. But Fate willed otherwise! Seitz himself told me the story: An attendant of the laundry in the Imperial Palace succeeded in gaining the ear of an Archduchess for a boy relative. Seitz's name, being last on the alphabetic list, was struck off, thus killing his last chance for an education.

Many years later, Seitz, as Mayor of Vienna, met the Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Piffl, at a reception. The two men began to talk about education. Seitz told the story of how the help of an Archduchess for the *protégé* of a laundress had frustrated his possibilities of education. The Cardinal suddenly turned pale. 'How old are you?' he asked the Mayor. The two men were of the same age. The child for whom the Archduchess had intervened was none other than Piffl himself.

'If it had not been for the Archduchess, you might now be Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna,' I remarked to Seitz.

He did not answer. But who knows? Deprived of the possibility of proper education, Seitz's education and environment took such a course that he became a Socialist, and one of the staunchest enemies of the Catholic Church. For a while he was a school-teacher, but while he was still a young man he was drawn into politics. By 1900 Seitz had been elected to Parliament as a Social-Democratic deputy. From that time on his rise was rapid: During the war he was Vice-Speaker of the Austrian Parliament; after the war he became the first President of the Austrian Republic; and in 1923 he was elected Mayor of Vienna, the Legislative Council of which was seventy per cent Socialist.

When in 1918 the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy collapsed, the Austrian Social Democrats had to take over the Government. They were not eager to assume responsibility in such terrible times, but both the Christian Socials and the Pan-Germans (the other large parties of the former Parliament) urged this course to allay revolutionary feelings. In the Federal Government of the new Republic the Social Democrats shared the power with the Christian Socials; in

that of Vienna they were the sole masters — the first time in history that a Social-Democratic Party had the privilege and responsibility of governing, even if in a city only semi-autonomous. The situation was not favourable: they had to take over the heritage of a lost war and of the ruins of four years of wartime economics. The power of the Socialists was soon increased by the fact that the Lower-Austrian peasants were dissatisfied by the constitution of the Lower-Austrian legislature in which Socialists and Christian Socials were represented in equal strength, and the separation of Vienna from Lower Austria was decided. This brought Vienna the same rights that were enjoyed by the other eight Federal States, making of her a City-State and of Seitz a Mayor-Governor. But this, while increasing the political independence, was not likely to help the financial plight of the city.

Terrible conditions prevailed in Vienna in those days. There was not only a shortage of food and some cases of actual starvation, but Vienna was ruined through the dearth of metals and the most important raw materials. The food departments of the municipality had incurred great debts during and because of the war; the streets had remained unrepaired, the plaster of the house-fronts was tumbling down; schools, hospitals, welfare organizations lacked the most primitive equipment. The hospitals had not even bed linen or bandages; medical supplies and technical appliances were missing. Influenced by the Revolution, the employees of the municipality had become nervous and impatient, and were constantly asking for higher wages, thus endangering the very existence of a Socialist Government in Vienna.

Fortunately a number of first-class men were found to help in the work of reconstruction, especially two great experts, Hugo Breitner, who was entrusted with the leadership of the financial affairs of the city, and Doctor Julius Tandler, who had the task of reconstructing its welfare organizations.

Without foreign help and within a short time Breitner achieved the reconstruction of the finances of this town, completely ruined by the war. He was bank director in the Laenderbank, and had showed his Socialist sympathies during the war by organizing the bank clerks into a trade union. After the war he offered his services to the Socialist Government and was appointed alderman in charge of financial affairs.

A short, shaky figure, with an emaciated face, partly covered by a black Henry IV beard, Breitner was nervous and bad-mannered. But he was a financial genius! This smaller and weaker replica of the Belgian statesman Vandervelde wore a huge broad-brimmed hat, and a necktie such as artists affect, but this disguise as an artist was not congruous with his whole being. He was an artist only in figures; but there he was a great one!

The tax system of old Vienna was indirect. There was, for example, the *Hauszinssteuer*, a State tax of twenty-six per cent on all rents in Vienna. Of this house rent tax thirty per cent went to the Province and another thirty per cent to the municipality. Thus, in the old days people paid forty-two per cent of their rent as tax, but nobody realized that the high rents were caused by this high tax. Another source of revenue was the duty on each commodity imported: meat, vegetables, fruits, and so forth, were subject to a food tax. Then Vienna benefited also from municipal monopolies, such as gas and electricity, and tramways, the rates of which were set high enough to yield a profit. These taxes had the disadvantage, first, of not being visible or direct taxes, and, second, of being levied on rich and poor alike, and thus in reality hitting the poorest classes most.

Breitner abolished the rent tax. Since there was a national rent restriction law which, through the fall of the krone (the Austrian wartime currency), caused rents to fall to one fourteen-thousandth of their pre-war value, he introduced in February, 1923, instead of the rent tax, a housing tax, which was progressively graduated. For the working-class dwellings the tax was low; for luxurious flats or villas it was very high.

After the war there was an acute housing shortage in Vienna. It is true that the population fell by nearly one hundred seventy thousand, but the standard of living had been raised by the Revolution, and there had been an increasing number of marriages during and after the war, so that the total number of households had grown by something like forty thousand. As there were no commercial rents, building by private enterprise was out of question, and the Federal State was too poor to attempt it. The Social-Democratic municipality, therefore, used the yield of the new housing tax to build huge municipal tenement houses. During the ten years of its house-building activities, it erected sixty thousand such flats.

The flats in these municipal houses varied in size and type. There was a type of flat with about four hundred fifty square feet of surface, consisting of a living-room, bedroom, and kitchen, with a small anteroom; another type consisting of one living-room, two small bedrooms, kitchen, and anteroom; and again another type with two living-rooms, one bedroom, and kitchen. In addition, there were some tiny flats for bachelors. Most of these flats were built in huge housing blocks; some of the tenement houses contained twelve hundred to fifteen hundred flats. In the Karl Marx Hof (now Heiligenstaedter Hof) five thousand persons live; in the Sandleithen complex, eight thousand.

Passages and corridors were eliminated to avoid friction between the tenants. The old type of slum houses in Vienna had been built so that on a long corridor there were several dozen flats, and there was only one w. c. for all of them at the end of the corridor. Also there was only one water-tap, the so-called *Bassena*, in the middle of the corridor. When the womenfolk came to fetch water, this tap was the gathering-place of the gossipers, each entertainment often ending in a quarrel. Even today the Vienna civil law courts are overburdened by libel suits arising from these quarrels round the *Bassena*. For this reason the new buildings lack these passages, and each flat has its entrance from the staircase. It is only natural that the municipality also took care to provide healthy accommodation. Each flat is beautifully equipped with modern gas-hearths, central heating, electric light, a nice little pantry with built-in sinks, and so forth. Great care was taken to provide plenty of free space for the inhabitants; at least fifty per cent, and often more, of the ground taken for building purposes was left for court gardens. On the eastern and southern fronts of each huge tenement block balconies and verandahs were built, and the balconies were usually of large size, enabling the inhabitants to bask in the sun in summer time in deck-chairs. Each block was equipped with a garden, and the big blocks with over four hundred flats were provided with roof terraces, partly for sun-bathing, partly for use as playgrounds for the children. There were liberal provisions for fountains in the court-yards, many of them decorated with excellent sculptures by first-class artists. Houses with more than four hundred flats were equipped with a central laundry, containing up-to-date washing machinery and a central steam-heated drying plant. The flats were not equipped



DAMAGE DONE BY BOMBARDMENT TO THE KARL MARX HOF  
DURING THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION



with bathrooms, but each house had baths in the basement. A shower-bath cost only one and a half pence; a 'tub' cost not quite sixpence.

The rents were low — about one and three-fourths pence per square metre per month, so that the average monthly rent amounted to about seven English shillings. To this was added the housing tax, amounting to eight to nine pence per month. This included the charges of the concierge, the lighting of the staircase, cleaning, chimney-sweep, and sewerage, but not the heating and laundry. In the large blocks there were special kindergartens for the children, equipped in the most modern way.

How was it possible for the municipality to give these flats at such low rents? In the days of the Social-Democratic Government, rents were calculated in these houses only on the basis of the cost of maintenance and not of amortization. The municipality could build these houses cheap because they built them, not out of borrowed money, but out of taxes. This reduced the building costs. Furthermore, in 1930 the director of the building department of Vienna told me: 'We bought wholesale. We ordered our brick supply for five years ahead, and for such a huge order we got greatly reduced prices. We ordered thirty-five thousand windows and twenty-five thousand doors at a time. Instead of consulting architects and incurring heavy fees, we have twelve architects employed on salary, and similarly we have one engineer on salary for every three buildings. Consequently, the average construction cost of a flat of about forty-seven square metres surface amounted only to £340. The huge Reumann Hof, with 480 flats, cost us £220,000; the Fuchsenfeld Hof with 480 flats, and the am Fuchsenfeld, with 600 flats (in all 1080 flats), cost us £285,000; and Sandleithen, with 1700 flats, £735,000. The result of all this is that the small man in Austria pays only three per cent of his wages or salary as rent, while in Berlin, where public funds are used for the promotion of building, the small man has to pay twenty-five per cent.'

These days, of course, are gone. The tenement houses still exist, but rents have been increased considerably. The new régime in Vienna has taken mortgages on the houses, and thus is compelled to increase the rents.

Similarly sweeping changes were effected by the Social-Democratic Government in the organization of welfare and public health. The

youth of Vienna was decimated by sickness and lack of nourishing food. In the days immediately after the war the Save the Children Fund, the Society of Friends, the Hoover Relief Administration, the American Red Cross, and other relief organizations made far-reaching efforts to save the population from the worst immediate effects of the catastrophe, but from 1921 onward the Social Democrats took over the task of saving the city's population from decay and destitution.

Professor Tandler, who organized the public health and social policy department of the municipality, was a great scientist — an anatomist. But he gladly followed the call, and his thick-set figure became a familiar sight in the City Hall. Tandler had a huge dark moustache, and wore a huge broad-brimmed hat and a necktie, as did his colleague Breitner; but unlike him, Tandler gave the impression of being a Bohemian rather than a scientist. But he soon had the opportunity to prove his practical worth.

The worst effects of the war in Vienna were the enormous increase of tuberculosis and rickets, and further, the large number of orphans and the enormous child mortality. Compared with pre-war days child mortality had increased by one hundred per cent. Tandler wanted to get to the roots of the trouble immediately. He found that many children died because the infectious disease hospitals for children mixed together light cases of infection like whooping cough, with serious ones, such as scarlet fever. He saw to it immediately that each child suffering from an infectious disease was separated from the others by a glass partition.

Tuberculosis also had to be combated. The previous municipal government had a home for tubercular children in Belaggio on the Adriatic Sea, but Tandler found that children returning from there relapsed when again in Vienna. He decided that the children must be cured of tuberculosis in climatic conditions which corresponded more nearly to that in which they would be compelled to live later. Thus Tandler erected tubercular cure stations for children in the Vienna suburbs of Baumgarten, Grinzing, and so on. Day and night the children were in the fresh air, and obtained as much sunshine as possible. The huge sunshine tenement houses of the city, with their balconies and sun terraces, also helped him in combating this terrible disease.

Tandler also provided that all poor children could obtain breakfast

and lunch at the *Schulausspeisung* in the school. The food was prepared from wholesome ingredients in a central kitchen, and was then distributed to the various schools in fast vans.

These measures, however, only signalled the preliminary steps of a magnificently organized system. The welfare organization of the municipality for children began to function even before the birth of the child. There was an extensive welfare organization in favour of pregnant mothers. If they registered during their pregnancy, they not only received a complete outfit for their future babies in the value of two English pounds, but if they were willing to submit to an examination in one of the thirty-six *Mutterberatungsstellen* (Advice Centres for Mothers) they received free medical attention, and also a benefit for several weeks after their delivery. There were years when more than ten thousand women enjoyed this benefit. There was a similar benefit for women in the last weeks of their pregnancy, while many could find refuge for their delivery at the maternity home of the municipality. Each unemployed or destitute woman received one litre of milk per day for one year, free of charge, after her confinement.

Immediately after the birth of the child the welfare organization stepped in. One of the many welfare inspectors visited the mother and inquired about the wishes of the family. If the parents were well-to-do, or were at least in comfortable circumstances so that they could look after the child, the inspector merely offered her congratulations to the mother. But if there were need, or unhealthy conditions of habitation, then immediately the welfare organization set to work. There was, of course, no compulsion in the system. The weapon of the Socialists was not compulsion, but persuasion.

If the newborn child was illegitimate, the youth office of the welfare organization automatically took over the guardianship. In the case of legitimate but poor children, benefits as high as one pound ten shillings were paid per month. If the child was in unhealthy surroundings, or the father was a drunkard, or the financial conditions of the family would not permit proper attention, the youth office, through the district inspectors, intervened. The same occurred if the child was sick, or of poor constitution, or if the parents happened to be ill. On the recommendation of competent inspectors the child was then taken to the *Kinderuebernahmestelle*, a central children's home. At this home there were three sections: one for babies

up to two years of age, one for children from two to six years old; and the last for children above that age, up to fourteen.

This *Uebernahmestelle*, however, served only as quarantine, and the children were kept there only for a few weeks, during which the doctors and the psychologists examined their physical and mental condition as well as their mental abilities and deficiencies. If the psychopathic tests were favourable, the children were returned to their parents, and were kept in municipal kindergartens or schools in the morning; while in the afternoons, if their parents were at work, they could spend their time at the various *Jugendhorte* (youth hostels).

In case of adverse results of the psychopathic tests, the children were taken to the children's centre at the Wilhelminenberg, a former palace bought by the municipality in 1927 from the Archduke Leopold Salvator. Tandler placed on the wall a marble tablet with the inscription: 'He who erects palaces for children breaks down prison walls!' In this centre further psychopathic tests were carried out for several months, and the children were divided amongst the various institutions, according to the result of the examination. The present Government of Vienna has discontinued this practice, and the palace is used for the Vienna Boys' Choir.

Sick and weak children were sent from the Wilhelminenberg to foster parents in the country, while some were returned to their parents. About thirty per cent of the children examined were placed in municipal or private boarding schools, where they were kept and educated at the expense of the municipality. About twenty per cent of the boys and a smaller per cent of the girls had to be sent to reformatory schools, destined for the education of the morally or mentally deficient.

In addition to kindergartens and excellent schools the Socialists created thirty skating rinks for children who wanted to practice ice-skating; in winter there was the possibility of a swim in the lofty pool of the luxurious Amalienbad, erected at great expense in the centre of a typically poor proletarian district; for the summer a score of swimming pools were erected by the Government in various public parks. Ample playgrounds for children were also provided. New parks were added to the numerous existing gardens and parks in the possession of the city. Many old cemeteries were converted into public parks, this at first against violent opposition from the

Christian Socials in the Municipal Council. Thus, when it was proposed to convert into public gardens the old Waehring Cemetery, a great storm rose from the Catholic Clerical Opposition. In the tumult Mayor Seitz, who was presiding over the Council, left his chair. From his usual seat he asked for the word and said: 'If anybody in this room has the right to complain about lack of piety toward the dead in this cemetery, I am the man. The bones of my grandparents, of my great-grandparents, and of their ancestors are buried there. I, however, find that there is no pleasanter thought than that new life should come forth from the bones of our fathers, that trees, shrubs, meadows, and flowers should grow over their earthly remains, and that amongst these trees and flowers the new generation should find health and joy. They should not perish, but live on for ever. . . .'

This speech ended the debate, and the park has added immensely to the improvement of the health of the youth of the eighteenth district of Vienna.

It is impossible in a single chapter to tell all about the various other reforms, such as uniform fares on the tramways, cheap tickets for workers, the fixing of the price of gas, electricity, and water at cost. Undoubtedly this welfare and youth protection system and the housing scheme and other social reforms were the best thought-out and most efficiently organized single system in the world. Unfortunately, one must talk in the past tense. It is all over now. Though the new rulers, who came to power after the terrible civil war of February, of which we shall hear more, were compelled to retain at least a part of the old institutions, the system, as such, exists no longer. But the benefits still exist, for Vienna, nineteen years after the establishment of this system, has a healthier new generation than any other town in Europe.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE RISE OF FASCISM

THREE years before Mussolini's March on Rome and fourteen years before the advent of National Socialism in Germany, Hungary possessed a Fascist régime with National Socialist colouring which set the example of ruling methods for both the later Italian and German experiments.

In a previous chapter we have seen what led to the establishment of a Red régime in Hungary, and heard about the collapse of Béla Kun's five months' experiment in Bolshevism. But when the special train left Hungary with Kun and the other people's commissars, there was already a Social-Democratic régime established in Budapest under the premiership of Julius Peidl, the leader of the Printers' Trade Union. And, as we have seen, too, Sir Thomas Cunningham and the Entente representatives had won the clandestine support of these Socialists in overthrowing the Red régime by promising to help a Socialist Government. But as the Central Powers, having accepted the armistice conditions because of the promises of the Fourteen Points, saw them repudiated, so the Socialists saw Clemenceau repudiate Cunningham's promises. Adopting the attitude that he was not entitled to intervene in the internal affairs of Hungary, he refused to carry out the pledges of the Entente military missions in Vienna, although the Socialists had fulfilled their part of the bargain.

The Rumanian troops halted at the gates of Budapest. Negotiations between the Socialist Government and General Holban, the commander of the Rumanian troops, started. But some Hungarian counter-revolutionaries, amongst them General Franz Schnetzer, appeared at the Rumanian headquarters and asked in the name of the bourgeoisie (to which name they were not entitled) that the Rumanian troops occupy Budapest, and 'make an end of the Bol-

shevik terror.' Thus invited the Rumanians entered Budapest on August 4. Now the counter-revolutionaries, under the leadership of Stephen Friedrich and General Franz Schnetzer, negotiated with the Rumanian headquarters, and under the protection of the Rumanian bayonets the first Fascist *coup* in Europe was effected on August 6, at six o'clock in the evening. About forty army and police officers, under the leadership of Schnetzer, Police Superintendent Wolkenberg, and the chief of the detective corps, Kormos, penetrated into the Prime Minister's palace where a Council of the Peidl Social-Democratic Cabinet was being held, and demanded that the Government resign within fifteen minutes. If they did not resign voluntarily, they would be arrested.

Stephen Friedrich was proclaimed the new Premier, Archduke Joseph of Habsburg Governor of the country. This Stephen Friedrich was a typical representative of post-war European Fascism. He came of a good bourgeois family and was a skilled engineer. He owned a small machine factory and repair shop at Matyasföld, near Budapest. Just over thirty when the revolutionary movement began in Hungary, he immediately threw his whole energy into the Revolution's service. He edited an obscure paper, called *A Nép*, in which he tried to outdo the most violent of the revolutionaries. 'Ten thousand heads must roll' was the streamer on the front page of the paper one day. This good-looking, blond, tall man often showed that he was willing to risk his life, not for any ideal (for he did not possess any), but for the sake of adventure. Thus, when on October 28, 1918, a huge crowd wished to proceed to Buda in order to hand over the demands of the revolutionary masses to Archduke Joseph, the representative of Emperor-King Karl, soldiers closed their way at the Suspension Bridge. It was this young Friedrich who stood in the first row and incited the crowd to force their way to the palace. The soldiers used their rifles, and three people were killed and many wounded as a result of Friedrich's irresponsible haranguing of the crowd.

His rôle on October 31, 1918, the day of the Hungarian Revolution, was unique and sensational. On the afternoon of this day huge posters appeared on the walls of Budapest, in large type, addressed to 'The Army,' and signed by Stephen Friedrich, 'Under-Secretary to the Ministry of War.' On the same afternoon Friedrich walked into the War Office in Buda, went into the room of the

Under-Secretary, and occupied the desk. When later asked under what right he assumed this post, he said: 'My own person was the source of right!' Actually, he had no commission of any kind, from either the National Council, or the Government. Karolyi, the new President of the freshly established Republic, believed that the War Minister, Colonel Linder, had appointed Friedrich as Under-Secretary; Linder again thought that Karolyi had appointed him. But it was impossible to remove him. In the annals of the Cabinet Council of November 5, one can read: 'The Premier mentions that Friedrich intends to organize a Zionist Guard. The Under-Secretary for Finances expresses the belief that Friedrich is in the pay of the Bolsheviks. The War Minister asked that Friedrich be forced to resign.'

In the same meeting of the Council the question was asked: 'Has Friedrich been appointed?' The Council established that he had not. And yet he continued, carried by the revolutionary wave, for several more weeks. When, however, he noticed that the genuine representatives of the Republic were turning against him and regarded him merely as an adventurer, Friedrich began to conspire with officers of the War Office who were of counter-revolutionary disposition. He intrigued and hoped to become War Minister, but finally he was forced to resign. Then he was involved in a stupid and unskilled counter-revolutionary plot which was discovered on January 16, 1919, and later, during the Bolshevik régime, he was imprisoned. But he boasted of his revolutionary merits, and called as witness the editor of the extremist Red paper *Voeroes Ujsag*, which was the official organ of Béla Kun, and he was, indeed, liberated. This gave him an opportunity to continue his conspiracies, which resulted in the Fascist *Putsch* of August 6 of the same year.

Today Friedrich is a prominent member of the Christian-Legitimist group and is a serious member of Parliament, fighting for the Constitution, opposing the Nazis and the subversive elements of the extreme Right, and yearning for the restoration of the Habsburgs, the removal of whom from the Hungarian throne he himself greatly aided.

But in August, 1919, when he became the dictator of Hungary (Archduke Joseph, the Governor, resigned a few days later under the pressure of the Entente), Friedrich initiated a system which remained the pattern for all Fascist countries in Europe. He openly



defied the Supreme Council in Paris and refused to comply with their request to resign. He had no army, since the Rumanians were still in occupation of Budapest, and they did not tolerate the formation of a new Hungarian army in the territories which they occupied. But Friedrich had at his disposal the 'Awakening Magyars' who organized Jew-baiting expeditions, and handed over the names of Bolshevik suspects to the Rumanians who allowed them to be beaten first by the 'Awakeners' and later by the Rumanian soldiers. The surreptitious murder of Jews and Bolsheviks began under Friedrich's rule. The army organized by Admiral Horthy could not come to Budapest because of the Rumanian occupation, but was transported in a roundabout way from Szeged to Transdanubia, where again the detachments of Héjjas, Osztensburg, Pronay, Babarczy, and Simonyi started the murder of innocent Jews, of Bolsheviks, Socialists, and any suspects who were believed to be sympathizing with Socialism. The number of murdered Jews and Bolsheviks went into the thousands; the number of the arrested persons, or those put into the concentration camp of Zalaegerszeg, reached at times fifty thousand. Torture and terror were part of the persecution by the 'Whites,' and often Oriental cruelties were performed. Not even women and children were spared these terrible tortures, as the case of Frau Hamburger, described by the Wedgwood Labour Investigation Commission, showed. This poor woman was placed naked on a red-hot stove; she was forced to lick the blood of her nephew who was tortured before her eyes. . . . The murder of the decent and moderate editor of the Social-Democratic *Népszava*, Béla Somogyi, was the Hungarian Matteotti case. He was kidnapped in the daytime as he was going home from the editorial office, accompanied by a friend, Bacsó, and after both were tortured in a most cruel fashion, they were killed and thrown into the Danube. The trade unions were dissolved, all Socialist manifestations remained impossible. Tens of thousands of people, to escape being murdered, emigrated from the country.

But Friedrich tried to show both the Budapest representatives of the Entente and the foreign press that his régime was popular. Thousands of telegrams of congratulations were ordered from all over the country (Friedrich had learned this lesson well from the Bolsheviks), and one demonstration after another was ordered to the Premier's office to show his 'popularity.' An intimidated popu-

lation naturally hurried to comply with the wishes of the Premier. How difficult it is to work under such conditions of terror I want to show by telling a story of which I was a witness in those days, which proves how similar were Bolshevik and Fascist methods even in 1919.

During the régime of Béla Kun, Noel Brailsford, one of the finest and most honest journalists in the world, with plenty of experience with terror and Balkan cunning, came to Budapest to investigate the situation of the Kun Government in Hungary as representative of the *Daily Herald*. With his usual energy and conscientiousness, Brailsford made a thorough examination. Kun's propaganda apparatus was undoubtedly clever, for Brailsford received the impression that he was permitted to see everything and to talk with everybody. Yet I attempted to have a conversation with him, and I could not get even near him! Nevertheless, after eight days in Budapest he came to the conclusion — which was undoubtedly correct — that the workers in the town were satisfied with the Red régime and that things were going fairly well.

But he told Kun that while he was satisfied that Budapest was on Kun's side, he had heard that there was much unrest amongst the peasants and that peasant resistance was developing into a veritable counter-revolution. Kun said: 'Well, nothing is easier than to check this. Let's go visit Transdanubia.' And thus one day Kun and Brailsford inspected towns in Transdanubia, their special train stopping at various stations. At every station a huge crowd assembled and cheered Kun. Naturally Brailsford could not have known that, just as the Fascists now have a system of gathering large crowds by threats and compulsion or exploiting the fear of the populace, Kun had already worked out such a system and his representatives everywhere managed to assemble large crowds at the various stations. Owing to the bad quality of the coal, the train was late and the crowd had to wait for hours at each station, which Kun exploited by saying: 'Look, how they love me! They have waited for me since the morning.'

Three months after Brailsford's visit there was a 'slight' change in Hungary. Kun was already an exile in Vienna, and Friedrich Premier of Hungary. Ashmead-Bartlett, correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, was in Budapest, and after one week's stay the constant 'spontaneous' demonstrations skilfully arranged by Friedrich's

'whips' convinced him that Budapest was absolutely for Friedrich. But was the countryside? 'Nothing easier,' said Friedrich, 'let's go to Transdanubia and see with our own eyes.' And so they went. The journey of Ashmead-Bartlett led to Kaposvar and Székesfehérvár, which was the same route that was taken by Kun and Brailsford three months before. The same huge crowds waited at the stations and cheered Friedrich, and Ashmead-Bartlett was satisfied that Friedrich had won the heart of the country population as well. This story, for which I vouch, characterizes the mentality of the terror, and shows the difficulties in the way of even the most honest observers in a country where Red, White, Brown, or I don't know what coloured terror is abroad!

For over two years this murderous White Terror was continued in Hungary, until Count Stephen Bethlen, with some bluff and much courage, succeeded in disarming the officers' detachments. The place of the terror was taken over by organized and lawful reaction.

In Bavaria and Austria, too, there were strong beginnings of Fascist movements as early as 1919. The fall of the short-lived Bolshevik rule in Bavaria, which lasted only from April 4 until May 1, 1919, brought to power the reaction in Bavaria, and helped the development of Fascist-like organizations, such as the *Orgesch* — Organization Escherich, the 'White Guards' of the Forstrat Doctor Escherich — and, of course, the National-Socialist organization of Anton Drexler, whose propaganda chief was Adolf Hitler. Both organizations had close connections in Austria. The Nazi connections, however, will be discussed in another chapter.

Forstrat Doctor Escherich was in close touch with the Tyrolese reactionaries who by then were organized in the Tyrolese *Heimwehr*. The cradle of the Austrian Fascist movement, of that of the *Heimwehr*, however, was Carinthia. When after the end of the war Yugoslav military formations marched into Lower Carinthia, with a view to taking possession of the Slovenian districts of this Austrian province, the Austrian population organized self-defence formations, which were called *Heimwehr*. The leader of this movement was the former Imperial General Ludwig von Huelgerth, recently Vice-Chancellor in the Schuschnigg Government. These *Heimwehr* formations in Carinthia offered, indeed, successful resistance.

The attention of the Supreme Council was drawn to this heroic struggle, and the powerful persons in Versailles ordered a plebiscite, which on October 10, 1920, turned out in favour of Austria. The Tyrol *Heimwehr*, which also was slowly organized, was brought into existence to defend the country against possible Italian imperialist aims. Later Styria also organized a *Heimwehr*, under the patronage of the Provincial Governor, Doctor Anton Rintelen, and even somewhat later Lower Austria and the other provinces followed suit.

The Bolshevik régime in Hungary and the short-lived Communist rule in Munich, as well as the high-handed excesses of the returning 'Green Cadres,' made the peasants uneasy, and they began to organize in *Heimwehr* formations for the defence of their property. With the successive decrease of the danger of a Yugoslav and Italian attack, the *Heimwehr* movement had become increasingly anti-Communist and anti-Socialist. After the defeat of the Communist régime in Munich, the Black *Reichswehr* and the *Orgesch* sent carloads of rifles and machine guns to the Tyrol, to enable the Tyrolese to organize on anti-Communist lines. I saw in those early post-war years huge motor-lorries filled with rifles and ammunition going from Bavaria to Reutte and other places in the Tyrol.

In the early years, however, the co-operation between the various provincial *Heimwehre* was small. It was only after the revolt of the proletariat in Vienna on July 15, 1927, that the Fascists could induce the peasant to take a more active interest in the *Heimwehr*. The revolt, which was a spontaneous outbreak of the masses angered because of the acquittal of two Fascists who murdered two Socialists, was unorganized and came very much against the will of the Socialist leaders. The low court jury which acquitted the Fascists was constituted mostly of Viennese sympathizers of the Socialists who did not realize that their verdict would cause such an upheaval. But the skilful propaganda of the *Heimwehr* was able to spread the tale in the provinces that it was an organized revolt, defeated only by the intervention of the *Heimwehr*. They declared that if the peasants did not realize that their property was in danger, it would be too late next time when a better organized revolt would be manœuvred by the Vienna 'Bolsheviks.' This appeal, indeed, had a success, and the ranks of the *Heimwehr* swelled rapidly. But the rivalry was still too great between the local organizations. At last

the various provincial leaders agreed to accept the Innsbruck lawyer, Doctor Richard Steidle, and the Judenburg lawyer, Doctor Waldemar Pfriemer, as joint leaders of the movement, while General Ludwig Huelgerth became the military leader. The chief of staff was Major Waldemar Pabst, who had a leading rôle in the Kapp *Putsch* in Berlin, and after its failure he escaped to the Tyrol, where with most of the other participants he found a warm reception.

With skilful demagoguery, the movement was successfully promoted in the provinces, and on October 7, 1928, the first *Heimwehr* demonstration march took place in Wiener-Neustadt, the reddest of the industrial towns in the neighbourhood of Vienna. The air was full of rumours of an impending *Heimwehr Putsch*. The Fascist *Heimwehr* was clamouring for an 'authoritarian' régime, for a *staendische* (corporate) Constitution, and the elimination of the 'Red' régime from the Vienna Town Hall. If their claims were not listened to, they threatened a *coup d'état*. In the autumn the demand of the *Heimwehr* for an amendment or revision of the Constitution became very loud. The rumours of an impending *coup d'état* became so frequent that a change of government was necessitated, and the Police President of Vienna, Hans Schober, was appointed Chancellor, entrusted with the task of making an amendment to the Constitution. The powers of the President were considerably increased, and the *Heimwehr* became somewhat quieter, though by no means silent.

In those days the name of the leader of the Upper-Austrian *Heimwehr*, Ernst Ruediger Prince von Starhemberg, was very often heard. Born in 1899, he was then only thirty years of age, but already he had had an adventurous past. His ancestors had played an important rôle in the history of Austria. Ernst Ruediger Count von Starhemberg (who was later created the first Prince) defended Vienna against the Turkish onslaught in 1683. Count Gundacker Starhemberg was one of the financial geniuses who reconstructed the badly shaken finances of Austria during the rule of the Empress Maria Theresa. Young Starhemberg's father, however, played only a minor rôle in pre-war Austria. Formerly a captain of the dragoons, he reported for military service at the outbreak of the Great War, though he was advanced in age, and he was made aide-de-camp of the War Minister. In this position he often complained to various deputies who waited to be received by the War Minister about the impossible behaviour of his eldest son in school. But not only the

old Starhemberg reported for military service: his son, then only seventeen, also volunteered and fought on the Italian front, where he distinguished himself. No doubt, Ernst Ruediger lacked neither courage nor ability, but he was bad-tempered, and the war prevented him from receiving a proper education. After the war he went to 'study' at the University of Munich, but the university was of little interest to him, and in 1920 he went with the Oberland Freicorps to fight the Poles at Annaberg. Later he drifted increasingly into the camp of Herr Hitler, and in the ill-famed *Biergarten Putsch* of November 9, 1923, he fought with the Academic Legion on Hitler's side.

After this he had to return to Vienna, and as in the meantime his father had died, Ernst Ruediger took over the management of the Starhemberg domains in Upper Austria. His mother, Princess Franciska Starhemberg, was a member of the Upper House of the Austrian Parliament and an ardent follower of the Christian Social Chancellor, Monsignor Seipel. She was very unhappy that the son of such a pious Catholic should be enslaved by the *Los-von-Rom* (Away from Rome) propaganda of Hitler, and begged Seipel to influence her son away from his National-Socialist inclinations. In the meantime Prince Starhemberg was using all his fortune for the equipment and maintenance of a completely private feudal army, the Starhemberg Chasseurs, a force of about seven hundred men strong. He then was elected leader of the Upper-Austrian *Heimwehr*, and started to play an increasing rôle in the movement as well as in Austrian politics.

There were, however, great rivalries within the ranks of the *Heimwehr*. Steidle, the Tyrolese leader, quarrelled with his co-leader, the Styrian Pfriemer; in Vienna the ambitious Major Emil Fey intended to seize the reins of the movement, while in Linz Starhemberg was casting about for a way to obtain power.

Ambitious Steidle then attempted a trick. He called together a meeting of *Heimwehr* sub-leaders in Korneuburg, and the *Heimwehr* was sworn in to obey first the *Heimwehr* leaders, and their oath in the army, police, or civil service was to count second only. This was an open declaration of war on the Democratic State. But this minor *coup* of Steidle was not successful. Fey especially resented it, and when in October, 1930, a new Cabinet was constituted under the chancellorship of the former War Minister, Karl Vaugoin, the

*Heimwehr* participated; Starhemberg became Minister of the Interior, and the Salzburg *Heimwehr* leader, Franz Hueber, became the Minister of Justice.

Starhemberg started his activity as a Minister by delivering a speech in which he repeated the phrase often used by Hitler: 'Heads will roll . . .' Such things, however, are not popular in *gemuetlich* Austria, and the Government gloriously lost the election which was led by the Minister of the Interior Starhemberg. Nevertheless, when in 1931 the *Heimwehr* assembled in Schladming to elect a new supreme leader, the choice fell on Starhemberg. The reason for his election was that the rivalry between Steidle, Pfriemer, and Fey was so intense that an outsider had to be chosen. Soon after his election, Doctor Pfriemer arranged a *Putsch* in Styria which broke down simply because Pfriemer lost courage and scooted off a few hours after the rising to Yugoslavia. I was down in Styria, and saw that the *coup* was a complete success. The army which was sent out only with great delay was not ready to intervene. But the leader was already in Yugoslavia, and without a leader the rebels did not know what to do. As a result of the revolt, Starhemberg was imprisoned for a few days.

In 1932 the *Heimwehr* joined the Dollfuss Government, and with this its greatest rise began. Fey, as Vice-Chancellor in the Dollfuss Cabinet, was able to provoke a Socialist rising in Linz which developed into a general strike in Vienna, and using this as a pretext Fey crushed, in the civil war of February, 1934, the Socialist power in Vienna. With this defeat, and with the suppression of the rising of the Nazis in July, 1934, the task of the *Heimwehr* was ended, at least as Mussolini and his lieutenant Starhemberg imagined it. Starhemberg, when he became Vice-Chancellor in 1935, promised Schuschnigg to allow the *Heimwehr* to be welded into the militia, thus depriving it of its political character. The Prince had had enough of fighting and politics; he wanted to enjoy life and its amenities. He loved to visit bars and night-clubs and to have a gay life.

Chancellor Schuschnigg tried to encourage the giving of food to starving children by popularizing the slogan: 'Take hungry children to your table.' Starhemberg was so well known for inviting actresses and women ski-champions to dinner that people said, 'His motto is "Take hungry girls to your table!"' And then there was the riddle,

'What are the favourite beers in Austria?' Answer: 'Woellersdorf Lager and Starhemberg Abzug.' (Woellersdorf is the concentration camp and Lager is not only a beer in German, but also a camp; while Abzug is a cheap sort of beer, but also means: 'Down with ...')

But Starhemberg could not so easily get rid of his responsibilities. Fey, who was forced to leave his post as Minister after the July *Putsch* in 1934, was doing everything to prevent the dissolution of the *Heimwehr* and to foment dissatisfaction in the rank and file. Under the pressure of this revolt, poor Starhemberg had to declare as late as the spring of 1936 in Horn: 'Only over my dead body shall the *Heimwehr* be dissolved!'

The *Heimwehr* was dissolved on October 9 of the same year. *Requiescat in pace!* The terse Vienna joke goes: 'Can you smell? This is Starhemberg's corps. ...'



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE RISE OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

QUITE recently a veteran Austrian politician of pre-war days, H. K. Wolf, celebrated his seventieth birthday. The seventieth anniversary of a former Austrian politician occurs fairly frequently, but on the other hand only once has Adolf Hitler sent warm congratulations to his 'courageous fighter for an idea.' Who is H. K. Wolf? Many Austrian Nazis, deeply devoted to Hitler, asked the same question when they heard of the Fuehrer's message. Today Wolf is a cripple, who owns a small tobacco shop in the suburbs. But at the end of the past century, his name was prominently mentioned in the *chronique scandaleuse* of Austrian political life. He was probably the wildest agitator for the Pan-German cause and, with his master, George von Schoenerer, was the pacemaker of a movement which found its logical conclusion in the birth of the National Socialist Labour Party of Germany. The Pan-German ideal, and its present incarnation, National Socialism, both had their cradle in the old Austrian Empire.

For many centuries the Habsburg Emperors in Vienna ruled over the bulk of the German race. In the days of the Holy Roman Empire, however, there was no need for the Pan-German movement. In that conglomeration of nationalities, compounded of Germans, Czechs, Poles, Hungarians, South Slavs, Italians, Dutchmen, and Spaniards, the Teutonic element always played the leading rôle. The Holy Roman Empire ended in 1806, but for sixty more years the Habsburgs played the leading part in the Deutscher Bund, a loose federation of thirty-six to thirty-nine German States. It lasted until the defeat of Austria by the Prussians at Sadowa in 1866.

The Germans then were partly unwilling to abandon their leading rôle in Central Europe, partly eager to restore German unity, which was torn between Prussia on the one side and the Habsburg Empire

on the other. The result was the rise of the German Nationalist movement in Austria. It began in 1867 under the banner of such democratically minded persons as Schoenerer, Engelbert Pernerstorfer, and Victor Adler. A strange team, for it will be recalled that Adler later founded the Austrian Social Democratic movement; while a few years later Schoenerer was to become the founder of the pro-Hohenzollern, Pan-German, *Los-von-Rom*, and anti-Semitic movement which was the forerunner of Hitlerism.

Schoenerer's programme influenced Hitler's mentality at least indirectly. The Schoenerer family castle stood at Rosenau, in the Waldviertel part of Lower Austria, only seven miles distant from the village of Spital, where the family of Adolf Hitler had lived for centuries. Schoenerer's demagogic campaign in the eighties of the last century, which had a sweeping success both in the German parts of Bohemia and Moravia and in this Waldviertel region, could not have failed to touch Hitler's father, Alois. And when, with his first wife's money, the elder Hitler succeeded in preparing for a civil service examination and became a customs official, he took some of his Pan-German and anti-Clerical creed with him. First he went to Braunau, and later, when retiring on a pension, to Leonding. The innkeeper's wife in Leonding, Frau Wiesinger, in whose arms Alois Hitler died, told me that, only a few minutes before his sudden death, she offered him two newspapers, but he refused them with the remark, 'They are black!' (Clerical).

The Schoenerer movement soon decayed, partly because of a split between Schoenerer and his co-worker Wolf, chiefly because this movement made the mistake of trying to recruit principally from the ranks of the upper bourgeoisie. Hitler, in *Mein Kampf*, also blames Schoenerer, with whose principles he showed complete agreement, for not extending his agitation into wider circles: '... An ideology will have a chance for victory only if the broad masses are willing to be its carriers and agree to take on the necessary fight for it.'

It was, however, only at the beginning of the twentieth century that these ideas were made acceptable to the large masses, when two interesting men brought it fresh life. They were Doctor Walter Riehl, a lawyer and Government attorney, and Rudolf Jung, a railway engineer.

Riehl started life as a Social Democrat and was an ardent follower of the Pan-German Socialist, Pernerstorfer. He then made the ac-

quaintance of Jung in 1903 in Reichenberg, Bohemia. Riehl was a candidate for the post of judge; Jung was in the service of the State railways. Together the two launched an energetic movement for a new labour organization along Pan-German and anti-Semitic lines. On October 31, 1909, they convened in Prague the first Pan-Austrian conference of the 'United German Workers' Federation.' Riehl's political programme was not smiled upon by the judges of the courts in which he practised and he had to leave the Government service; nor were Jung's employers pleased by his Pan-German activities, with the consequence that he was transferred to Iglau. There Jung made the acquaintance of Hans Knirsch, the man who was to complete the triumvirate which founded the National Socialist Party in Austria, and hence indirectly in Germany. In November, 1910, they launched what they called the *Deutschsoziale Arbeiterpartei*. It made such progress that at the general elections to the Austrian Reichsrat in 1911 it obtained three seats.

The next step was the elaboration of the party programme. This was done at a meeting in Iglau in 1913. The essence of the programme, marking an important milestone in the history of National Socialism, was as follows: 'The party is the representative of the working class of the German people. We are separated from the dogmas of passionate class warfare, however, by our *voelkische* (racial) ideal, and by our realization of the fact that in a State like Austria, where nationalities are mixed, the German workers must demand national citizenship as a matter of self-preservation. Our motto must be, "Work in German districts for German workers only!"'

The idea of international workers' organizations was rejected. The party was against social and political reactions, and declared that it would combat all mediaeval, clerical, and capitalistic privileges as well as all *fremdvoelkische* (anti-racial) influences, 'especially the ever-increasing Jewish spirit in public life.' In 1916 the party took the name *Deutsch-Sozialistische Arbeiter Partei*, and in May, 1918, the name *Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiter Partei* (D.N.S.A.P.). About that time Riehl chose the *Hakenkreuz*, or swastika, as the emblem of the movement, taking it from the Baltic freebooters of von der Goltz, who wore it as a decorative badge on their helmets.

After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the

Sudeten-Germans were separated from the Germans of Austria proper. As a result the D.N.S.A.P. was split into two parts, one in Czechoslovakia, one in the new Austrian Republic. To counteract the effects of this separation an 'Inter-State National Socialist Office for the German-Language Territories' was established in Vienna under the chairmanship of Riehl. The Sudeten-Germans were represented in it by Jung, Knirsch, and Hans Krebs. In Germany there were then only the beginnings of similar movements — one in Duesseldorf under the leadership of an engineer named Brunner, another under Julius Streicher in Nuremberg, another in Munich under an iron-turner named Anton Drexler.

The first important Inter-State National Socialist Convention took place on December 13, 1919. By that time the Munich leaders, Anton Drexler, and his propaganda chief, a house painter named Adolf Hitler, were already in correspondence with Riehl's organization. Another link between the German and Austrian movements was furnished by the fact that an early collaborator with Drexler and Hitler, the first President of the *Deutsche Arbeiter Partei*, F. Harrer, was a Munich journalist well acquainted with the ideology of the Austrian movement, especially in its Sudeten-German form. On February 6, 1920, Riehl sent an invitation to Drexler asking the Germans to co-operate with the Inter-State organization. This letter undoubtedly was responsible for the fact that the German National Socialist Party — N.S.D.A.P. — was founded two weeks later, on February 24, 1920.

In a letter to Riehl shortly thereafter (March 1, 1920), Drexler and Hitler explained that their organization regarded as imperative the complete union of all German tribes, 'without regard to present State connections.' They wrote: 'Our aim is to give the German nation the position in the world which is due it on the basis of its culture and size; and this cannot be achieved until the present separation between the German tribes is eliminated, until our people is united. As far as negotiations are concerned, Herr Adolf Hitler comes into consideration on our behalf. He is co-signatory of this letter, and he is a native of Austria. Herr Hitler is the *Werbeobmann* of our local grouping of the party.' There follows a discussion of the advisability of establishing a centre for the organization. The letter then explains that their fight against Berlin is only tactical, and concludes: 'We wish to reaffirm that our Fatherland is called

neither Prussia nor Bavaria, neither Austria nor Saxony, but Germany.' Though Drexler was then the chief of the party, the style of the letter reveals Hitler's authorship. And at the next Inter-State party meeting in Salzburg, on August 16, 1920, Hitler appeared as Germany's representative.

The close connection between Austrian and German National Socialism continued until 1923. Hitler frequently visited Austrian National Socialist meetings, as well as Inter-State assemblies. His last appearance at an Inter-State party meeting was in Salzburg in August, 1923. At this meeting came his breach with Riehl. The question under discussion was the attitude which the Austrian National Socialists should adopt in the coming Austrian elections. Riehl believed that the National Socialists should participate at the elections and win their way to power through legal means. Adolf Hitler was for abstention and an armed *Putsch*. Hitler's ideology was accepted, and Riehl resigned on September 15 both as Chairman of the Inter-State Office of the National Socialists and as President of the Austrian D.N.S.A.P.

Seven weeks later, Adolf Hitler made the famous Munich beer-garden *Putsch*. It was a fiasco. The failure at Munich brought disaster across the frontier in Austria. The Austrian party broke up and remained insignificant until Hitler secured his first great victory in September, 1930 — a victory gained not with arms but by the Riehl method of seeking power through the ballot which Hitler had scorned in Austria in 1923.

In the intervening seven years, from 1923 to 1930, Austrian National Socialism remained without significance. The thinned ranks were divided into several camps, the most important looking to Hitler, the next important following Riehl. But when Hitler obtained his six million votes in the German elections of September, 1930, there was a galvanic reaction. Alfred Eduard Frauenfeld, a thirty-year-old clerk employed in a branch office of the Vienna Bodenkreditanstalt, undertook to reorganize the Hitler wing of the Austrian movement. When the bank failed and he lost his job, Frauenfeld began devoting all his energies to the task and succeeded in enormously increasing the party following. It is strange that this comparatively uneducated and none too able man succeeded in creating a mass movement where Riehl, clever and ideologically well versed, was unable to make any progress. Riehl was like Schoenerer: he in-

vented the programme and the platform, but could not convert it into a mass movement. After all, Schoenerer had all the mottoes of the movements of later days. He coined the phrases: 'Austria must be freed from the tyranny of the Jews!' 'Boycott Jewish merchants!' and:

*Ein wahres deutsches Maedchen spricht:  
Mit Judenjungen tanz ich nicht.*

A true German girl would say:  
I will not dance with Jewish boys.

Frauenfeld's work of organization, on the other hand, brought enormous successes to the movement. Within three years the membership in Vienna rose from three hundred to forty thousand. Each fresh victory of Hitler in Germany was followed by an increase in the number of National Socialists in Austria; and in the spring of 1933, Frauenfeld felt confident that within a few weeks the power in Austria would fall almost automatically into his lap. When I asked him at the time what he intended to do in case the Dollfuss Government offered resistance, he answered that he was prepared to seize power by force. I asked: 'Have you sufficient rifles to carry through an armed change of Government?' Frauenfeld answered: 'No, we have no arms here; but we can have as many as we want sent across the frontier at Kufstein at an hour's notice.'

This was a gross miscalculation. As soon as the Austrian régime realized the dangers of a Nazi *Putsch*, the regular army, police and irregular forces (Starhemberg's *Heimwehr* and Schuschnigg's *Sturm-scharen*) were increased to the point where they could prevent the smuggling of arms from Germany. If Frauenfeld had been a more experienced politician, he probably would have foreseen this.

We know the rôle of Hitler after 1933. What happened to those other Austrians who stood with him about the cradle of National Socialism? Riehl, the spiritual father of National Socialism, is a practising lawyer in Vienna. He lives in comparative poverty because he still defends Nazis before the courts more for idealistic than for financial reasons. His political influence at the moment is almost nil. He is disliked by Hitler, who rarely forgives those who contradict him. And his requests to be permitted to organize a nationalist group — German Nationalists — within the Fatherland Front have hitherto been rejected by Schuschnigg.

Of the Germans who collaborated most closely with Hitler in the early days, Harrer died many years ago. Anton Drexler, the iron-turner, who was the head of the Munich branch of the party of which Hitler was the propaganda chief, is living in Munich, forgotten and in poverty, probably philosophizing about the gratitude of men whom one helps to greatness.

The development of National Socialism in Germany naturally was bound to affect other countries in which there were German minorities. Czechoslovakia, with her German minority amounting to twenty-two and a half per cent of the population (the Germans assert that this proportion is even higher), was bound to feel the reaction of the rise of Hitler, especially since, like Austria, she borders on Germany. Moreover (as we saw at the beginning of this chapter), the early Nazi-like movements of pre-war days, such as that of Schoenerer or Riehl, recruited their chief supporters in Old Austria in the German parts of the Bohemian province. Riehl and Jung laid the foundation of the first National Socialist Party in Reichenberg, Aussig, and Iglau, that is, in Sudetic German territories.

After the war, at the first general elections in Czechoslovakia, the Sudetic Germans obtained seventy-two seats in the Prague Parliament, out of a total of two hundred eighty-one. The Czech Nationalist wave then compelled the Germans, in self-defence, to unite in the German Federation, to which all German parties belonged except the German Social Democrats. But already in 1922 there was a split in this federation: one group, which was willing to recognize Czechoslovakia as the basis of their existence, formed the so-called *Arbeitergemeinschaft* (working community), to which group the German Agrarians and Christian Socials belonged. But the extremists refused to co-operate with Czechoslovakia, and they united in the *Kampfgemeinschaft* (fighting community). This latter group consisted of the German Nationalists and the National Socialists. At the 1925 elections, the activists, who wanted co-operation, achieved considerable success, while the German Nationalists lost forty per cent of their former votes, and their leader, the extremist Rudolf Lodgmann, was not re-elected. But the National Socialists still retained their following which was all the noisier for not being large.

The National Socialist movement in Czechoslovakia, however,

could not make any real progress until September, 1930, when the first great election victory of Hitler in Germany had its natural repercussion in Czechoslovakia. Since then the movement has grown rapidly, its chief leaders being the founders of old days: Rudolf Jung and Hans Krebs. When Hitler came to power, this National Socialist Party, like its counterpart in Austria, started a violent campaign, in which *Feme* (revenge) murders, kidnapping of German *émigrés*, murdering of exiles, such as the dastardly murder of Professor Lessing in Marienbad, were employed without discrimination. When the National Socialist Party's agitation reached limits which even a democratic Government could no longer tolerate, the Czechoslovak authorities decided to dissolve the D.N.S.A.P. of Czechoslovakia. This happened at the beginning of October, 1933. The leader, Hans Krebs, succeeded in escaping in time to Germany. He took a canoe and floated down the Elbe River until he reached German territory. The Nazi deputy, Herr Kasper, was arrested for allegedly helping Krebs in his escape, and the two other prominent figures of the movement, the deputies Schubert and Jung, were also arrested. They succeeded in escaping to Germany later on, and most of them are now members of the German Reichstag.

The German Nazis, however, have not given up the hope of keeping the movement alive in Czechoslovakia. On October 1, 1934, Konrad Henlein, a teacher of gymnastics at Asch, Northwestern Bohemia, who later on became the leader of the German *Turnerbund* (Gymnast Association), brought a new organization into existence which was to replace, in a more practical and better camouflaged form, the old National Socialist Party. Henlein, a man in the middle forties, small, unimpressive, unintelligent, with a typical German face with pince-nez, was chosen because he had shown some organizing ability when developing the *Turnerbund*. He called the new organization *Sudetendeutscher Heimatsfront*. This organization made rapid headway, and at the elections of May 19, 1935, Henlein obtained more than sixty per cent of the total German votes, and gained forty-four seats out of the total seventy-two German seats in Parliament.

Henlein lacks the personality, vitality, and demagoguery of the greater dictators. His victory is, therefore, to be ascribed to the real grievances of the German minority, which we have already seen in the chapter on Czechoslovakia; their reduction to the status of a



second-rate people, when they had long been accustomed to play a ruling part in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire; and the fact that, as industrialists, they were harder hit by the economic crisis than were the Czechs, who are for the most part agriculturalists.

The platform of Henlein differed in some of its side issues from Hitler's programme, especially because it accepted the Austrian idea of corporative reconstruction, such as was propagated by the Vienna professor, Othmar Spann; it did not renounce the religious basis, and also took over many catchwords from the Social-Democratic movement. Yet it kept the idea of totalitarianism, such as is propagated in Germany; Henlein is a protagonist of the racial idea, and develops a wild anti-Marxist and anti-Liberal propaganda, following the footsteps of his German friends across the border. But he is supple: in London he declared that all that the South Germans wanted was proper rights and then they would be willing to co-operate in a Czechoslovak Republic; in Germany he talked of 'one people — one State,' which means that, like *Mein Kampf*, he demands the union of all German-speaking peoples.

His platform calls for a kind of autonomy for Sudetic-German territories; and naturally he pleads for better relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia (as if Prague would oppose such a counsel). He said in June, 1936, in Eger: 'It is essential that Prague should begin a new, honest relation with the totality of the German motherfolk and especially with the German Reich . . . I should rather be hated with Germany than obtain advantages out of this hatred against Germany.'

Actually, the Germans in Czechoslovakia, in spite of their rightful complaints, are better off than any other German minority in Central Europe. They enjoy many minority rights; they have proportional representation, not only in Parliament, but also in the district and municipal councils; the education of the children is conducted in their mother tongue, and the German language is employed in all public offices in districts where the members of the minority exceed twenty per cent.

In the beginning of 1937, another praiseworthy attempt was made to pacify the German minority. Since it was impossible to satisfy the Henlein group, which is too much connected with radical Nazi propaganda, Premier Hodza began negotiations with the leaders of the activist parties; that is, the three German parties within the

Government coalition and representing about one-third of the German population.

The activist parties presented a memorandum to the Government in January of the same year, and in reply, the Government agreed to pay special attention to the economic interests of the minority and to invest more money in public works and construction in the German parts of the country. They also provided that all citizens of the Republic, without regard to nationality or religion, may be civil servants. With the increasing loyalty of the national minorities, their employment in the civil services must be increased. The Government was also willing to permit a wider use of the national minority languages, and in the future official documents written in Czech were to be circulated with a German (or Magyar) translation in the minority districts.

Naturally, the demand for autonomy, such as proposed by the Henlein Party, could not be considered. Premier Hodza, answering the Henlein Party deputy, Rosche, in a debate in the Prague Parliament in November, 1936, pointed out that territorial autonomy would mean the separation of the German element from the Czechs. It would mean that, in territories mostly inhabited by Germans, three hundred eighty thousand Czechs would have to be sacrificed, while in other territories seven hundred thirty thousand Germans would come under the Czech legislation. There is, after all, no clear-cut frontier to be drawn. There are eight islands in the Czech territory in which the Germans live in compact masses, and even if some are closely connected, other groups are widely separated by stretches inhabited by Czechs.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MUSSOLINI ADOPTS LITTLE DOLLFUSS

AUSTRIA was created by a process of elimination. Six countries carved up the body of what was once known as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and what was left is now called Austria. She was allowed to remain in the possession of magnificent mountains, but they are no source of existence. And the Powers who created Austria left her with six million inhabitants, of whom almost two million lived in one town, Vienna. Now Vienna was all right as capital of an empire of fifty-five million: for six million it was too big! Here there was an intelligent, highly developed, and very progressive population concentrated in one town, and a primitive, retrogressive populace remaining in the mountainous countryside.

This divergence was naturally widely reflected in politics, and while most of the Viennese sympathized with the Socialists, the bulk of the country population, at least in the first twelve years after the war, was in the Catholic Clerical camp of the Christian Social Party. The achievements of the Socialists in Vienna we have already discussed; but the Federal Government, since 1921, has rested in the hands of Christian Social Chancellors, though this party could rule only in a coalition with the Pan-Germans and, later, with the Agrarian Party.

If Mayor Seitz was the representative of the achievements of the Social-Democratic Municipality in Vienna, Monsignor Ignatz Seipel was the man who laid the foundations of the policy which led directly to Dollfuss, and then to Schuschnigg. He at least laid the tracks. It was not his fault that one of his pupils, little Engelbert Dollfuss, set the switches wrong, at least on one (if not more) occasion. If he had remained alive, things probably would have shaped somewhat differently, for he was a master in weaving the ties of policies so intricately that Austria was balanced from all sides. He

was a master of machination and entanglements, and yet all his intrigues served no personal gains, no material profits, nor ambition for rank and distinction. All his scheming, cunning, all his almost Mafia-like conspiracies served only to benefit in the first place the Church, and, in the second, the country.

The French Minister one day desperately threw up his hands, complaining to an Allied colleague: 'What can one do with such a man? He does not drink, he does not eat, he does not smoke, he cares not for women. How can you win him over to anything?'

Yes, Monsignor Prelate Ignatz Seipel, former Professor of Moral Theology at the Universities of Salzburg and Vienna, Minister of Social Welfare in the last Government of Emperor Karl, was a strange person. A Saint Francis of Assisi or a Savonarola of the twentieth century. Even his outward appearance was that of a Dominican monk! — medium-sized, lank, ascetic-looking; a clever head, emaciated face, a big Savonarola nose; piercing, clever eyes, hidden behind rimless eyeglasses; his voice soft, pleasantly flowing, very preacher-like, if pleading, high-pitched. He lived the life of a monk. Seipel, even during his chancellorship, remained the chaplain of the church attached to the Nunnery of the Heart of Jesus, and lived in a cell of the cloister. I had an interview with him in the Chancellor's Office one day, which then was still in the palace of the former Austrian Imperial Premiers in the Herrengasse, the Modena Palace. In these gorgeous surroundings he received me. But when I left, a lay sister of the cloister was just bringing his simple meal from the nunnery at the Landstrasse on an iron dish.

Seipel's endeavours were directed toward two things: to restore the old position of the Church in Austria, and to assure a tolerable economic existence for his country in the midst of a mad Europe. And as the economic plight was the most imminent danger, he had to solve this question first.

Austria was facing starvation. The krone was rapidly deteriorating. The country seemed to be at the brink of ruin. The man who never coveted earthly goods knew nothing about finances or economics. But he was well versed in all the intricacies of political blackmail. And, lo, in the days of the greatest distress, Prelate Seipel proceeded to Berlin. 'This is the *Anschluss*' (the union of Germany and Austria), sighed the frightened French. Yes, but soon after the Chancellor visited Prague. Now the Germans feared that he would bring

Austria within the orbit of the Little Entente. And to frighten the Little Entente, he now suddenly went to Verona, to meet Count Sforza, the Italian Foreign Minister. The Little Entente feared that he might join Italy's revisionist campaign. . . . This was a masterpiece of Machiavellian intrigue. What can one do with such a man? He certainly must be silenced, said the Powers. And at the next meeting of the League of Nations Austria obtained a large loan under the protection of the Geneva institution. Austria was saved!

This was Seipel, and such were his methods. The same cunning machinations characterized his home politics. But only for the sake of the greater glory of God and for the benefit of the Fatherland — for the Fatherland which must first of all be Catholic! And to attain this aim, he had to fight the Socialists who were the opponents of the Church in the country. The Socialists originally were fighting against the return of the Catholic Clerical régime which characterized the last decades of the Imperial régime. But when they realized that Monsignor Seipel was trying to smuggle back the same Clericalism which the Socialists hated from the pre-war days, then, probably very unwisely, Socialist propaganda was concentrated, not only against Clericalism, but against the Roman Catholic Church. And to punish Seipel the Social Democrats secretly instructed their followers to leave the Church if this was also agreeable to them. Such was the influence of the Socialists on their masses, that this appeal was followed by tens of thousands.

This revenge act, however, only stiffened the determination of Prelate Seipel. Now his action against the Socialists took the form of a crusade. And as he realized that with the ballot box alone he was not able to break the power of the Socialists, he encouraged the *Heimwehr* movement, the growth of which we have already followed.

When, after adventurous years, a Christian-Social-*Heimwehr* coalition at last came to power in the new Dollfuss Cabinet, most of the neutral observers realized that the Socialists had lost the game. Seipel wanted to defeat Socialism, but his idea was to defeat them in a parliamentary way, using the *Heimwehr* only as an armed force to break the Socialist monopoly of the streets of Vienna. In this mainly Socialist city the Social Democrats almost enjoyed a monopoly of assembly: any opposing meeting would have come to grief through the resistance of the majority. This Seipel wanted to

end. But even if his methods were authoritarian, and he wanted to have a Government that could use the strong fist, ultimately his ideal was to do it at least within the forms of a democratic Government. Seipel, of course, was a Churchman, but also a master of parliamentary 'wagglings.' The Socialists shivered whenever he wanted to push through in Parliament one of his 'devilish' schemes for some reform which, first of all, was always intended to harm the Socialists. He had half a dozen pupils who had to make the negotiations. He generally withdrew from the worst conflicts and seemed to wash his hands in innocence. I well remember when it came to the question of amending the Constitution in 1929. He sent the *Heimwehr* to agitate for it in the streets, in the villages, in the assemblies. He let Schober, the Police President, have the nominal power as Chancellor during that period. The blame should rest with somebody else! But as chief of the Christian Social Party, the last word in concessions rested with him. It was his energy and determination which regulated the settlement. But his Machiavellian mind kept the forms to the last. It must appear that the agreement was made by Schober, that the demand came from the *Heimwehr*, and that he had nothing to do with the whole affair!

The meeting of the House, in which the new bill about the amendment was to be brought in, was fixed for eleven o'clock. At twelve the session was not yet opened. In the lobbies the journalists, who kept in touch with the deputies, whispered that there were still differences to be overcome. Then suddenly Seipel left the committee room where the bill was being debated, and walked with smiling face toward the session room of Parliament. To querying journalists he spoke of the weather and about some trivial event that happened the day before. And then he entered the Parliament room. The galleries were heavily packed: the crowd had been waiting there in excitement ever since nine o'clock. But the places of the deputies were empty. Seipel walked in and took his usual seat in the front row. He was all alone in the huge room except for the usual attendants. The crowded galleries were now kept in even greater suspense. And thus he waited, calm and lonely, for another hour, until the negotiations in the committee rooms were finished. Everybody knew that the amendment was the work of Seipel, but he had his alibi: everybody saw him an hour before the opening of the meeting seated quietly and lonely in his seat.

This was Seipel, the master of parliamentary routine and tactics. Dollfuss, the new Chancellor, was not even a Member of Parliament. He was, it will be remembered, secretary, and later director, of the Chamber of Agriculture of Lower Austria. But though Josef Reither, the Peasant leader in Austria, had found him very useful in the organization to promote the interests of the peasants, Dollfuss had no idea of the intricacies and difficulties of parliamentary and political life. In his young enthusiasm he was willing to take over a post which no experienced politician was prepared to accept.

Let us fleetingly review the situation in May, 1932, when Dollfuss, the Chancellor who was smaller in stature than even Napoleon, took over the power in Austria. Parliament reached a deadlock, owing to the insurmountable divergences between the non-Socialist parties on the one hand, and the Social Democrats on the other. The financial and economic situation was terrible, due to the collapse of the Credit Anstalt just a year before. In addition, the world economic crisis had taken a turn for the worse, partly because of the difficulties precipitated by the Credit Anstalt affair, and partly because of the depreciation of the English pound and other currencies, as well as because of the consequent fall of agricultural prices all over the world. And in addition the German Nazi danger was already written in big letters on the walls of Austria.

No responsible politician was willing to accept the position of Chancellor under such circumstances. Two skilful parliamentary tacticians, the former Chancellors Ender and Buresch, failed to reach a compromise with the Socialists. It was a capital mistake on both sides, because, in face of the financial difficulties and the visible Nazi menace, both the moderate Christian Socials and the Social Democrats should have striven to effect an agreement. But silly prestige was stronger than common sense, and when nobody wished to take over the power, Dollfuss formed his Government in a coalition between the Agrarian *Landbund* and the *Heimwehr*. His majority, provided that there was a full House, consisted of *one!* No parliamentarian would ever have accepted such a solution.

The two leading and experienced politicians of the bourgeois camp, the former Chancellors Seipel and Schober, were dangerously ill, and a few months after the ascent of Dollfuss to power they died. The illness of Seipel seemed to endanger even Dollfuss's majority. And yet, when the day of a critical division approached, Seipel died;

according to the Austrian election system, the next man on the election list became automatically Seipel's successor in Parliament, and this assured Dollfuss's majority. Schober's death also became helpful to him, because Schober, though seated in Parliament as an oppositional Pan-German, was originally elected on a joint German-Agrarian list, and his death brought a *Landbund* deputy to Parliament as his successor, thus doubling Dollfuss's majority! When the Opposition jeered that he owed his escape from defeat in Parliament only to the death of these two statesmen, deeply religious Dollfuss answered, with conviction, that Providence willed it so!

Not only the internal political situation, but also the foreign political relations of the country were in those days uncertain. With the rise of the Fascist power in Germany and with the continuous weakness of the League of Nations, the situation became complicated. France, of course, was interested that the independence of Austria should be maintained, but she was having her own troubles at home. Moreover, the Socialist Foreign Minister, Paul-Boncour, sympathized with the Austrian Socialists, and disliked the internal policy of Dollfuss, which was continuously harassing his own party friends in Austria. Great Britain was far away, and judging by the mood of that country England was not ready to take on any commitments in Central Europe. There remained only Italy, the country which besides France was interested in preventing the *Anschluss*. Mussolini never advertised loudly his intention of preventing the *Anschluss*, but he was always determined to act should such a danger arise. One of his close collaborators told me once: 'The Duce does not wish to make the mistake of France, always loudly proclaiming that she will not tolerate a union of the two German countries. Such a prohibition from without would only make any cause more popular. So the Duce is silent about it, but none the less he is not prepared to permit the establishment of a Germany of seventy million inhabitants on the Brenner frontier!'

But before the Duce came to this decision, Austria had to walk the pitiful way of penitence. In February, 1928, at the urging of the Tyrolese Christian Social deputies, Chancellor Seipel made a speech in favour of the badly oppressed South-Tyrol Germans. This 'impudence' infuriated Mussolini. He recalled his envoy, Signor Auriti, from Vienna, and made bitter comments, forgetting all diplomatic usage, in the Italian Chamber. 'What is Austria, and who is she?'





CHANCELLOR DOLLFUSS AND HIS RIVAL, HERR ANTON RINTELEN,  
THE HERO OF THE PUTSCH WHICH CAUSED THE DEATH OF  
DOLLFUSS

This picture was taken in Rome in 1933 when Rintelen was Austrian Minister in Rome.

he asked. And then explained: 'She is a miserable spittoon. . . .' On a previous occasion, when Seipel had spoken in favour of the South-Tyrol Germans, Mussolini threatened to carry the Italian tri-colour beyond the Brenner. This time he said: 'This is the last time that I shall speak on this subject; the next time I shall make acts speak.' But Austria could not afford to live in a state of diplomatic warfare with Italy. A loan was just being asked from the League, and the Italians, in retaliation, were holding up the proceedings in all League committees. By July an exchange of notes between Italy and Austria followed, in which Seipel recognized that the case of the South-Tyrol Germans was a purely internal affair of Italy and that Austria was interested in them only for cultural reasons, and in return Italy promised to send again a diplomatic representative to Vienna. But this incident with Italy probably hastened Seipel's resignation, and it was Chancellor Schober who in December, 1929, persuaded Italy to waive her liens on Austrian revenues and properties, which then freed the way for an Austrian loan. Schober also made a trip to Italy, where he was courteously received, and in 1930 a treaty of friendship was concluded between Italy and Austria. With this the era of better relations between Italy and Austria began.

When, however, Schober in March, 1931, concluded his ill-fated customs union pact with Germany, Italy viewed this with increasing distrust. And though Italy never said anything openly against the *Anschluss*, it was the vote of Anzillotti, the Italian representative in the Hague International Court, which decided the fate of this pact. This *Anschluss* attempt now caused Italy to watch with more attention developments in neighbouring Austria. Besides his Minister in Vienna, Mussolini kept his own personal agent in the Austrian capital whose duty it was to see that politics developed in Austria in a sense favourable to Italy.

Commendatore Eugenio Morreale was this trusted man of Mussolini in Vienna. He once fulfilled a fairly important job by creating order in Milan when the Fascists came to power, and later on he was sent as the correspondent of the *Popolo d'Italia*, Mussolini's own paper, to Vienna. Then, some time after, he was entrusted with the task of leading the Italian Press Office in Vienna. This Press Bureau was not attached to the Legation. It was working 'parallel' with the Legation. And Morreale very soon endorsed the policy of the *Heimwehr*, and gave moral and practical advice to this Austrian

Fascist organization. Morreale instructed his chief that Prince Ernst Ruediger Starhemberg was the man of the future in Austria. But when the German Nazi danger was becoming menacing to the interests of Italy, the *Heimwehr* was not yet sufficiently strong to take power into its hands, and thus it was necessary to come to an understanding with the actual chief in Austria, Dollfuss.

And when in March, 1933, the German elections under Hitler's chancellorship brought the Nazis fully to power, it was obvious that delay was no longer possible. On April 11, 1933, Dollfuss left Vienna by plane for Rome, allegedly 'to participate in the Easter ceremonies at the Vatican,' Dollfuss being a devout Catholic. But those who were familiar with the background of the international developments realized that a meeting between Mussolini and Dollfuss was bound to take place sooner or later. This was the first important meeting at which Dollfuss, who was uneasy about the aims of Nazi Germany, sounded the views of Mussolini on this subject. The visit was decisive in the history of Austro-Italian relations. When Dollfuss came back, he declared to journalists:

'I received the impression that the treaty of friendship which was concluded in 1930 between Italy and Austria was not a mere formality, but a treaty of friendship in the real sense of the word. I know that we have sincere and good friends in the South on whom Austria can depend at any time, and who will always support us on questions of international politics.'

Mussolini, at this first visit of Dollfuss, took a great fancy to Austria's 'pocket Chancellor.' Dollfuss flew again in June to Rome, and then in August of the same year he stayed with Mussolini and his whole family at Riccione. Such an intimate form of visit is considered by the Duce as a special distinction for good friends. This meeting was certainly the most unconventional in the history of famous meetings. Part of the conversations took place in a sailing boat which Mussolini reached by swimming, and then conferred with Dollfuss in his bathing-suit. Other conversations were conducted in a motor-boat driven by Mussolini. By that time the friendship between the two dictators became sincere. And Mussolini finally adopted little Dollfuss.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE LITTLE ENTENTE

AT THE end of the Vienna Stubenring stands a huge white stone building with impossibly topheavy sculptures on its brim. It is the former Imperial War Office of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, parts of which are now the Army Ministry of the Austrian Federal State. It bears a huge inscription in golden letters: '*Si vis pacem, para bellum.*' (If you want peace, prepare for war.) Clearly nonsense. Unfortunately, however, today it is the motto all the world over. The Little Entente adopted it after the last war. They prepared for war to secure peace in Central Europe. And if today one must consider France and her friends in the Little Entente as serious and sincere guarantors of the world peace, in the face of an impossibly militant Germany, the aggressive and unyielding nature of the Little Entente helped to contribute greatly to the complications which brought about the present chaos in Europe. One arms against a danger, but not against a phantom. And this alliance of the forty-five million people of the countries constituting the Little Entente was directed against Hungary, with eight million inhabitants, small, destitute, and disarmed. They allied themselves against a phantom, and thus succeeded slowly in creating a danger, just as the short-sighted policy of Clemenceau and Poincaré was responsible for the developments which followed in Germany, and which, as a final consequence, brought the Hitler régime to power.

There are, of course, two sides to the Little Entente. A spiritual co-operation of those who profited by the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy was natural and essential. The roots of such a co-operation reach back almost to the days before the war, when the dissatisfied minorities of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy were welcomed in the Court of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, or met in Wickham Steed's flat in Vienna. There existed a contact between Masaryk and

other Czech leaders and the dissatisfied Rumanian minority leaders, like Vajda-Woodwod and Maniu, or with the Slovenian or Bosnian leaders. The Croats had also close contact before the war with Prague.

During the war, in a flat at the end of the Boulevard Saint-Germain in Paris, representatives of nationalities which later were to take over the carved-up heritage of the Austrian Empire, used to meet and discuss the possibility of co-operation between the countries which were to be created if the war ended with a victory of the Allies. These conferences, which were attended frequently by important French politicians and writers, can probably be regarded as the real foundation of the Little Entente. Such a spiritual co-operation of the winners of the war was not only possible but beneficial, and the resulting Little Entente, as such a spiritual co-operation, did great service at the various meetings of the League of Nations in the endeavours for the maintenance of peace and European order.

Besides this spiritual co-operation, however, a military Great Power was brought into existence, directed primarily against Hungarian irredentism, and the restoration of the Habsburg Monarchy. After the fall of the Béla Kun régime and the establishment of a White Government in Hungary, a ruthless demagoguery was abroad amongst the Magyars for the recovery of the lost territories. It is, of course, a mistake to believe that this irredentist campaign would not have come in a democratic Hungary. In a previous chapter I have described Gaspar's work in the propaganda office of the pacifist Karolyi. But White Hungary carried on this propaganda in ruthless form and with much noise and hullabaloo.

In the autumn of 1919, I went to hear Stephen Friedrich, of White Terror fame, then Prime Minister of Hungary, address a mass meeting in Szekesfeharvar in Transdanubia. Among his high-falutin phrases, I suddenly heard: '*A Kárpatoktól az Adriáig...*' Count John Hadik, the last Premier of royal days, stood next to me, and said to a mutual friend, another former Minister: 'What is this idiot talking about? It is sheer nonsense in face of our defeat.' For Friedrich promised to the people that the lost territories, 'from the Carpathians to the Adriatic,' will be recovered. 'Don't you know?' replied the other Minister. 'This fellow is such a nonentity that he must outbid the highest bidders.'

And out of this outbidding started the irredentist propaganda. It is

obvious that Hungary was not prepared to accept the situation created by the defeat, at least not in its inner conviction. The Hungarians had to accept it *de facto* in face of the bayonets that surrounded them. But to convince them it was useless to create the armed ring of forty-five million people round a disarmed country. Such rings give the best opportunity to the Goemboeses, Hitlers, and Michailoffs.

The alliance was born from bilateral pacts, concluded by the three countries in the period from 1920 to 1922. In 1920, soon after its first taking shape, the Little Entente received the blessing of Italy in the Treaty of Rapallo. The chief reason for Italy's sympathy for this group then was the fear of a restoration of the Habsburgs. This sympathy existed until after the coming into office of Marquis della Toretta, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, when Italy's policy began to change. Since the summer of 1921 Eastern Europe has been the scene of a conflict between Italian and Little Entente policies, a conflict which lasted until the end of 1936 — that is, for fifteen years.

The conflict between Italy and the Little Entente was first clearly defined at the time of the Burgenland dispute in September, 1921. Austria, by the terms of the Treaty of Trianon, had been ceded a strip of Hungarian territory, called Western Hungary by the Magyars and Burgenland by the Austrians. It had never been delivered to Austria until, in the late summer of 1921, the Entente undertook to hand it over. This attempt met resistance from a few thousand Hungarian freebooters, who effectually repulsed the Austrian gendarmerie. (Originally the Socialist *Volkswehr*, the then standing army of Austria, was sent to occupy the Burgenland, but the existing Soldiers' Council decided that the freebooters were no 'gentlemen,' and refused to attack them.)

In the following diplomatic negotiations, Austria was backed by the Little Entente, whereas Italy plainly took Hungary's side. Italy was responsible for the calling of the Venice conference between Austria and Hungary, which resulted in a compromise, Austria winning the bulk of the agricultural territory of the Burgenland, but Hungary after a plebiscite retaining the chief industrial city, Sopron (Oedenburg) and its environs. This was the first open revision of the territorial clauses of any of the treaties, to favour an ex-enemy country. Naturally the members of the Little Entente, who were the losers in this fight, drew even nearer to one another, fearing repeti-

tion of such attacks against the *status quo*, or against the provisions of the Versailles Treaties.

It was quite clear why Italy favoured Hungary in this situation. The Little Entente in those days had been better able to manage Austria than Hungary because of Austria's far more desperate situation. Also, Czechoslovakia had in her hands a secret treaty concluded with the former Socialist Premier, Karl Renner, which permitted Czechs and Yugoslavs to make a corridor of communication across Austrian territory. The Burgenland lay in the way of this tentative corridor, and Austria's acquisition of it would clear the path straight through. To this welding together of the two Slavonic nations, Italy was opposed, because the old fear of a Slav and Adriatic domination still perturbed her, and this fear had been greatly augmented by her difficulties with Yugoslavia over the questions of Albania and the Dalmatian coast ports. Italy, on the contrary, wanted to bring the non-Slav nations, Hungary and Rumania, into one block.

The settlement of the Burgenland question was a triumph for Italy. But in her further speculation Italy counted too much on Rumania, and that was a bad calculation. Take Ionescu, then Rumanian Foreign Minister, afterward Rumanian Premier, apparently began to have doubts of Italy's value as an ally. His first blow to Italian policy was the conclusion of a military treaty between Rumania and Greece. Take Ionescu was a diplomat of the old school. Unlike his colleague Benes, then Czechoslovak Premier, who believed in modern methods of diplomacy, Ionescu trusted old dynastic connections and military conventions. The Greek-Rumanian alliance was preceded by the marriage of the Crown Prince, now King George II, to Elisabeth, Princess of Rumania. The Greek betrothal was shortly thereafter followed by the announcement of the engagement of King Alexander of Yugoslavia to Princess Mariora, the other daughter of King Ferdinand. This engagement was likewise accompanied by a military treaty. Thus did Rumania disappoint the hopes of Italy, fortify her connections with the Little Entente through Yugoslavia, and indirectly bring the Little Entente an ally, in Greece.

Meanwhile, Benes, through the Treaty of Lana, concluded in mid-December, 1921, brought Austria within the Little Entente circle, if not as an actual member, as a friend. The Lana Agreement

secured from Austria the pledge, first, to execute 'all stipulations of the two treaties [Saint-Germain and Trianon] to their full extent; second, to observe neutrality in the event Czechoslovakia were attacked; third, not to tolerate anti-Czech irredentist organizations on Austrian territory.'

The Lana Treaty was unexpected in Italy and created consternation there. It is true that it also created a great upheaval in Vienna when it became known, and caused the fall of Chancellor Schober. On the other hand, it held for five years, and the Czechs gained five valuable years with it.

Another triumph of the Little Entente of those early days was the friendship with Poland. This collaboration was very close right up to the time when Zaleski ceased to be Foreign Minister, and was succeeded by Colonel Beck. Up to then Czechoslovak-Polish relations, despite the differences during the days of the Peace Conference, were good, and Rumania was connected by alliance with Poland.

The early years of the Little Entente were devoted to counter-acting the irredentist activities of the Magyar hotheads in Hungary and of the Macedonian *comitadjis* of Bulgaria; to keeping a watch against secret rearmament of these countries, and to checking any efforts for Habsburg restoration in Austria and Hungary.

The years 1925 and 1926 brought the first clouds over the hitherto unchallenged Little Entente supremacy in Central Europe. Italy's pact of friendship, and later on, her pact of mutual assistance, with Albania, accompanied by a formidable loan and the establishment of an Albanian National Bank under Italian control, was a great blow to Yugoslavia's position in the Adriatic and naturally concerned the two other allies, even if Albania did not come into the scope of questions covered by the Little Entente alliance. A much more serious blow to the prestige of this alliance was the Hungaro-Italian treaty of friendship, concluded in Rome in April, 1927.

Long diplomatic preparations naturally preceded this friendship treaty, which was signed on the occasion of Premier Bethlen's visit to Rome. But even before that Mussolini expressed his 'love' for Hungary. As he was not in a position to show his affection in a substantial form, such as, for example, the return of Fiume to Hungary, he said it with books. In February, 1927, he returned to Hungary several volumes of the Corvina codices which came from Buda



to Italy — via Constantinople. This was only the signal for greater things to come. Count Bethlen then made a trip to Italy, accompanied by his wife, the charming and intelligent Countess Margit Bethlen, herself a writer of some renown in Hungary, and the Duce received both with distinction and friendship.

The semi-official Pester Lloyd wrote triumphantly after this visit: 'The iron ring of the Little Entente is still intact, yet Hungary managed to evade it by finding her way through this ring to the sympathies of England and Italy.' After returning from Italy, Count Bethlen eulogized Signor Mussolini and the Italian Fascist system.

A few weeks after this visit, the half-yearly conference of the Little Entente took place; special significance was given to this meeting by the increasing Italo-Yugoslav feud and by Count Bethlen's friendship treaty with Italy. Jachimov (Joachimstal), where the conference met, is a health resort of great Central European fame. The waters contain radium, and thus Jachimov is recommended as a cure for many diseases, such as gout and rheumatism. 'Why is the Little Entente conference held here in Jachimov?' was the joke of one of the assembled correspondents. 'Because the Entente is very sick!' 'Why is the Little Entente called by this name?' asked another Italian correspondent. His answer was: 'Because there is so *little* entente amongst them.'

It almost seemed that the Italian colleague was right, at least, so it appeared from several of the utterances made at the conference. But during my almost two decades' experiences in Central Europe, how often was the death of the Little Entente predicted, and yet it still thrives! Hungarian irredentism, Habsburg restoration propaganda, Italian Imperialism and German impudence (especially since Hitler's rise) have kept this alliance harmonious, despite occasional minor or major divergences of opinion amongst its members.

The hostile augurs, of course, were always prepared to see signs of doom and decay in many of the apparent weaknesses of the Little Entente system. And when I was present at this Jachimov conference, the augurs were again busy. Thus when the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Mitilineu, was outspoken about Italo-Rumanian relations and said that Rumania felt sincere friendship for Italy because she had signed the treaty which ceded Bessarabia to Rumania, this was commented on as a cleavage in the Little Entente. But when

Mitilineu added with unusual frankness that in the Yugoslav-Italian conflict Rumania was a firm ally of Yugoslavia, but at the same time a sincere friend of Italy, this immediately brought to the minds of many the conclusion that the Italo-Hungarian treaty had weakened the bonds between Italy and Rumania. Mitilineu did not even avoid discussing Hungary openly: 'Personally,' he said, 'I am glad that Hungary has succeeded in breaking out of her isolation. The Little Entente wishes to improve relations with Hungary, perhaps in the form of a Locarno Pact, but the basis of such an agreement with her must be Hungary's pledge to respect the Peace Treaties.' And this is, of course, the reason that Hungarian relations with the Little Entente, despite the ten years that have elapsed since Jachimov, have continued strained and unsettled. The Little Entente wishes to perpetuate the *status quo*; Hungary refuses to give her signature to a treaty which would amount to 'doubling her Peace Treaty signature,' to repeating what she signed once under duress in Versailles. But it must be said that some progress has already been made in this regard. Yugoslavia, when she concluded the pact of perpetual friendship with Bulgaria (which is, of course, in the same position as Hungary), avoided making her sign over again obligations which she unwillingly signed under pressure in 1920. Perhaps the form of friendship concluded between the two Slav countries will yield a pattern which will help to effect a reconciliation between the Magyars and the Little Entente.

The years have passed, bringing now and then dangers of conflict between some member of the Little Entente and a third country, but all these dangers have passed without causing actual armed conflict. The Soviet-Russian-Rumanian conflict was settled when the two neighbours signed a non-aggression pact in the system which Russia concluded with her Western neighbours; Italy and Yugoslavia were faced by serious conflicts in 1927, 1928, and 1930, but fortunately the war menace subsided.

The sudden rise of Nazi power in Germany has, however, changed the entire situation. When in 1933 Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, the Little Entente (and especially Yugoslavia, under the leadership of King Alexander) and Poland were of the opinion that the best cure would be preventive war. France was too far away from Central Europe to understand the anxieties of these little countries in face of the rising German power. They believed,

rightly or wrongly, that Germany should be once more defeated before she became unduly strong, or else she would take a domineering position in Central Europe, in which event there would be nothing else left for the small countries but to bow to Germany's will. When France, or rather the French General Staff, refused to agree to the urging of her allies, then two countries especially, Poland and Yugoslavia, tried to compensate what they believed to be the fault of France by starting a *rapprochement* with Germany which was all the more easy because the Germans themselves took great care to cajole and win these two countries. In the case of Poland it resulted in the agreement or treaty of January, 1934, by which apparently there is a secret understanding that Poland will support German aims directed against Czechoslovakia.

In the case of Yugoslavia it did not come so far, though the Germans made fervent endeavours to gain Yugoslavia on their side. The first occasion was poor 'Stabchef' Roehm's visit to Dalmatia. This was a holiday, but Roehm cleverly used the occasion to cement Yugoslav friendship. The Yugoslav army entertained a secret admiration for the German military machine which fact had also helped the German wooings in Belgrade. An even more serious attempt to gain Yugoslav sympathy was made by General Hermann Goering who visited Yugoslavia during his honeymoon in May, 1935. And then in the summer of 1936 Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, visited Yugoslavia with a view to strengthening Yugoslav-German friendship.

All these visits caused headaches in Paris, Prague, and even Bucharest. It is true that when the German menace became extremely serious in 1933, the three Foreign Ministers of the Little Entente had already met in Geneva in February of that year and drafted the so-called 'statute of the Little Entente,' according to which a 'permanent Council' of the Little Entente, consisting of the three Foreign Ministers, was established; this Council was to conduct the common foreign and economic policy of the three countries, it was to meet thrice a year, and was to be aided by a permanent secretariat and by an economic council.

This was an important departure, the more because the three countries pledged to consult each other before concluding a treaty or other arrangement with another country. Since then the Czechoslovak-Soviet-Russian pact has been concluded, and though Yugoslavia did not like it much, she consented. Yugoslavia concluded a

treaty of perpetual friendship with Bulgaria. Though Rumania was not overjoyed by Yugoslavia's treaty of perpetual friendship with Bulgaria, nevertheless she consented.

Often proclaimed dead, the Little Entente is still alive. How it will act in wartime remains the speculation of many. Will Yugoslavia go to the aid of Czechoslovakia if the latter is attacked by Germany? Or will Czechoslovakia go to the help of Rumania attacked by Russia?

The Little Entente had, and still has, great international figures who for many years stamped their mark on the meetings of Geneva. Though Benes, of course, is now President of the Czechoslovak Republic, his influence on foreign politics of his country is still dominant. At the Bratislava Conference of the Little Entente in September, 1936, for example, the whole important part of the meeting was carried out at the President's castle, Topolcanky, where the statesmen of the Little Entente closeted themselves. Benes's funny, short figure dominates this alliance behind the scenes, and during the last year the giant figure of Stoyadinovitch has come also more into the foreground. Benes is a politician, and only a politician; the Yugoslav Premier is an economist who was manager of an Anglo-Serbian bank for many years. Benes's political ideas and Stoyadinovitch's economic abilities complement each other. Titulescu's Tatar face is no longer seen amongst the active directors of the Little Entente, but his ghost still walks, especially in the Foreign Office in Bucharest. His hysterical shrieks, cursings, and pleadings are missed in Geneva as well as at the Little Entente conferences. But nobody is dead in the Balkans until he is buried six feet deep. And so Titulescu is by no means dead. Nor is the Little Entente.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE BALKAN ENTENTE

IF ANYBODY before the war said, 'I am intending to undertake a trip in the Balkans,' others were apt to look at him as if he proposed to commit suicide. The fears probably were exaggerated. I was fifteen years of age when I made my first trip all over the Balkans, accompanied by a twelve-year-old cousin, and I had nothing but a few letters of recommendation to consuls, to friends of my father, and to some of the local authorities. And the trip went off nicely. Nevertheless, a Balkan trip in those days — this was 1905 — meant a lot of inconveniences and precautionary measures. It was advisable to have a 'Parabellum' pistol; and plenty of insect powder, quinine, aspirin, bicarbonate of soda, and several other preventive and curative medicaments. Albania and Greece were infested with bandits, and in certain parts of the Turkish Empire it was advisable to have a Nizam or a gendarme to accompany you at dangerous 'crossroads.' Then there was the endless inconvenience of finding refuge where one could pass the night! Vermin was abroad, not only in the dirty cottages of the extremely hospitable peasants, but also in all the country inns, and even in the big hotels of the Balkan capitals. A trip in Albania always meant a few days' disinfection afterward. When the American Red Cross tried to exterminate the vermin in Albania after the war by attempting the disinfection of the *kulas* (Albanian country house or hut) of the Squipetar highlands, the tribesmen were indignant. 'If you exterminate the lice, how shall we know whether our children are healthy or sick?' The Albanian was firmly convinced that only healthy children got lousy, and thus the appearance of the small insect was regarded as a welcome sign of health.

Then there was the *bakshish* — tips, tips, tips everywhere. It is true that the tips were infinitesimally small, but the continuous tipping embarrassed the European or American tourist. In business,

again, there was the corruption. It is true that corruption was abroad even in the mighty Russian Empire, the powerful protector of many small Balkan nations, but undoubtedly the Balkans learned the lesson well. The corruption was almost necessary, because salaries were small and insufficient for a proper livelihood, thus the official was obliged to get a small addition to his salary by exacting tips. In Rumania a railway truck could be 'moved' from one end of the country to the other only if several station-masters were bribed, plus the guard; and often the engine-driver expected a small tip too.

If the highroads were made uncertain by bandits, murder and arson were not only the methods of desperate highwaymen, but often means of political pressure. Greeks, Bulgars, Serbs, and Armenians kept *comitadjis* in their fight for 'independence' and domination in the Macedonian parts of the Turkish Empire. Whistling bullets in the Balkans repeatedly brought dangers of war to Europe, and in June, 1914, caused the outbreak of the Great War.

How bad the reputation of the Balkan statesmen was in Central Europe is characterized by this joke, which, though absolutely untrue, assumed the nature of an anecdote. The Serbian Premier, Nichola Pasitch, gave a dinner-party, at which the guest of honour was the British Minister, Mr. Whitehead. After the dinner the Minister missed his gold watch. He was greatly embarrassed when he had to tell his host that the watch had disappeared. 'You know, M. le Président,' said Whitehead, 'it is a family heirloom, and I should hate to lose it. . . .' Pasitch was not at all embarrassed. He asked: 'Who sat next to you?' Whitehead said that it was the Minister of such and such a Balkan country. 'It's all right, then,' said Pasitch and disappeared. Five minutes later he dragged the British Minister into a corner and handed over the watch. 'Who had it?' asked the Minister. 'Your neighbour at table, but, hush, he does not yet know that I got it back. . . .'

It is a good joke, but absolutely invented. There are even other interesting versions. According to one, the host suddenly called his guests and said: 'During dinner somebody, by mistake, took his neighbour's watch instead of his own. I am placing a silver salver on this table here, and then we will turn out the light for two minutes. We expect that the lost watch will be on the salver. . . .' And after the lights were once more switched on, there were five watches on the tray. There is still another version which holds that when the light went on, even the silver salver was missing. . . .

Twenty years ago, if there was a nasty murder by an *apache* in Paris, Jacques Bonhomme at his morning coffee reading of this dastardly act, murmured: '*C'est déjà chez nous, comme dans les Balkans . . .*' If an Austrian deputy complained about a case of mild corruption, he immediately said: 'We are becoming rapidly Balkanized. . . .' If Germany rattled the sword too much, peaceful British citizens remarked in their clubs: 'He acts like a fifth-rate Balkan nation.'

After the war the European nations learned the lesson, and two such eminent observers of European politics as the Mowrer brothers could call their book which reviewed the actual state of the European countries: *Balkanized Europe*. In those days the Balkans pushed their frontiers right up to the German border, to Switzerland and to Italy.

I don't know whether the Balkans took it too much to heart that the so-called civilized countries were beginning to imitate them, but they suddenly realized that their usual way of dealing with men and affairs was fearful; and the Balkans began to de-Balkanize themselves as rapidly as they could. Today the roads of Albania or Greece are safer than a Paris suburb; it is better to be an oppressed minority in Yugoslavia than to be a Jew in Germany; political murder is no longer the weapon of the Macedonians in Bulgaria, and corruption can easily bring one to the gallows in Kamal Ataturk's country. And while Germany menaced the peace of the world by uttering threats, or making ominous preparations against Poland, Austria, and Czechoslovakia as well as Lithuania, the Balkans realized that strife was ruin and they buried the hatchet, uniting in the Balkan Entente as a grouping best suited for the preservation of peace. If the Balkans used to be *les enfants terribles* of Europe, if they represented discord, jealousy, and revenge in the minds of other Europeans, today they have set a shining example to Europe. One still catches a bug or so in a Bucharest hotel; Greek inns still reek too much of onion and garlic, and tips are expected in all these countries, but the accommodations and habits in the Balkans today are not too different from life in the various Southern European Latin countries. And certainly the Balkan Pact has assured the peace of this peninsula, at least for some time to come.

The movement for peace in the Balkans began just when the rest of Europe started to go up in flames: in 1932. Just when Hitler's

rise in Germany made the fate of Europe increasingly uncertain, there was a great deal of diplomatic activity observable in the Balkans for the preservation of peace. It really began back at the opening of the present decade when Premier Venizelos visited Turkey and established friendly relations with the former arch-enemy. Then in September, 1933, another Greek Premier, Panayoti Tsaldaris, visited Ankara, and laid the foundations for a lasting Graeco-Turkish friendship. Visits of prelates, lawyers, poets between two other arch-enemies, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, have lessened the tension between these two countries. Then Tsar Boris III of Bulgaria left his capital and visited Rome, Geneva, Paris, London, and Belgrade. Close at his heels moved King Alexander I of Yugoslavia, who returned Boris's short visit in Belgrade by calling on Boris in Euxinograde, near Varna, after having paid a visit to his brother-in-law, King Carol of Rumania. From Varna King Alexander I proceeded to Istambul, where he was festively received by Ghazi Mustapha Kemal. Some weeks after these meetings King Carol and King Boris met on board the *Stephen the Great* on the Danube, and discussed the political questions of their respective countries while the ship steamed from Giurgiu to Nicipoli. There were other meetings of these kings, and a fortnight before he was murdered, King Alexander of Yugoslavia visited Sofia, thus going into the lion's den! But nothing happened to him in this former enemy country; the assassin's bullets reached him on the soil of an ally — and in Western Europe, too. Meanwhile, the various Premiers and Foreign Ministers also undertook journeys in their respective neighbours' capitals.

These meetings of the kings and captains were occasioned by two considerations: first, the internal conditions of their kingdoms, and, second, the situation created by the proposed Four Power Pact and Germany's new attitude. They were designed, in the first place, to ensure the survival of the monarchist principle. Realizing that dissension amongst European monarchs had caused the downfall of four great empires, the German, Turkish, the Austrian, and the Russian, three kings tried to found amongst themselves a scheme for mutual insurance.

The meeting of the various Foreign Ministers, on the other hand, was conditioned by the signing of the Four-Power Pact and by the continuous weakening of the League of Nations. As long as the League of Nations was the chief instrument of inter-State politics



and of peace in Europe, the small countries enjoyed a considerable influence in this international organization. The signing of the Four-Power Pact, despite certain qualifications included at the wish of France, roused fears in the smaller countries that this co-operation of the four major European Powers might gradually lead to some such concert of the big countries as existed before the war, which made the smaller States mere pawns in the game played by the Great Powers.

Independently of these endeavours, but moved by the same considerations, the very shrewd and active Turkish Foreign Minister, Tewfik Rushdi Bey (now called Rushdu Aras), started a movement in the southeastern corner of Europe for guaranteeing the peace and creating a Balkan co-operation regardless of the activities of the Great Powers. Tewfik Rushdi set himself a very difficult task; that of detaching the small countries from their Big-Power protectors and strengthening them by mutual co-operation. The Turkish Foreign Minister's conversations with Tsaldaris led indeed to an amazing result: Greece and Turkey, ten years before mortal enemies, concluded a pact of amity in which they not only guaranteed the safety of their respective territories for the next ten years, but decided to start a very close economic co-operation as well. The effort to extend this pact to a third neighbour, Bulgaria, failed, because King Boris' country, before signing such a pact, wanted a reconsideration of the territorial clauses of the Neuilly Peace Treaty, in which, by Article 48, an outlet to the Aegean Sea was promised to Bulgaria. Greece considered that this clause meant only the grant of commercial rights in a free zone of one of the Aegean ports, probably Alexandropol (Dedeagatch); but Bulgaria also wanted a strip of territory which flanked the railway line leading to such a port.

At the end of January, 1934, King Boris and Queen Giovanna were the guests of King Carol of Rumania at Sinaia, and the two kings had long telephone conversations with King Alexander of Yugoslavia. But King Boris could not take the responsibility of accepting membership in an Entente which would have meant Bulgaria's renouncement of any future revisionist policy. At the beginning of February, 1934, Turkey, Greece, Rumania, and Yugoslavia signed the Balkan Pact which contained the following provisions: A mutual guaranty of territorial integrity; mutual security against aggression from outside; an agreement to regulate inter-Balkan differences by arbitra-

tion; and an obligation not to conclude any outside political treaties without common consent.

The Balkan Pact has stood well the wear and tear of the three years which have passed since its conclusion. The murder of King Alexander in the autumn of 1934 found the Balkan partners on Yugoslavia's side when the tension with Hungary about the harbouring of the murderers brought almost warlike complications. In the spring of 1935 the revolt of the Greek Liberals under Venizelos against the attempts of a Royalist restoration was another trial for the alliance. It was believed that Bulgaria might exploit the internal strife in Greece for her own ends, and it seemed that the temptation was only too great for Bulgaria to manoeuvre a *coup* and make an armed dash to the Aegean Sea, while Greece was torn in two hostile camps. But on the basis of the Balkan alliance Turkey came to the rescue and ordered several Turkish army corps into Thrace, ready to protect her ally's territory should it be violated by Bulgaria. The Montreux Conference about the restoration of the freedom of the Straits was another occasion when the Balkan allies supported their friend Turkey, though this meant for some of them, especially for Rumania, a certain amount of sacrifice.

Two Balkan countries, Albania and Bulgaria, did not join this Balkan Pact. Albania, of course, was so much under the thumb of Italy that she simply could not afford to join a combination which, at least at the time of its conclusion, appeared to be decidedly anti-Italian. Bulgaria, again, refused to join for reasons which we have already discussed. But Yugoslavia laid stress on gaining Bulgaria's friendship. Originally, when Germany tried to draw Yugoslavia into the German orbit, Goering tried his best to bring Bulgaria and Yugoslavia together. But, independently of this German effort, the two Slav countries realized that a reconciliation and a *rapprochement* were necessary. Bulgaria saw that the Balkan Pact on the one hand, and Russia on the other, constituted an iron ring from which there was no escape. Her friends, Italy, and later, Germany, were far away, while the bayonets of the Balkan Entente were near, and the Greek revolt of 1935 showed that they were effective. Under these circumstances, she had to seek to break the ring at one point. Yugoslavia was the country with which she had had no special quarrel lately, and thus endeavours were made to improve relations between the two Slav nations in the Balkans. The result was the 'Pact of Perpetual Friendship' signed in Belgrade on January 24, 1937.

Since then the busy *voyageur*, Rushdu Aras, has paid a visit to Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, in Milan. The visit was made possible by the conclusion of the British-Italian gentleman's agreement about the Mediterranean. The Abyssinian War caused certain fears regarding Italian imperialist ambitions in Turkey and Yugoslavia which have drawn nearer to Great Britain since the Abyssinian interlude. But when Britain concluded the gentleman's agreement with Italy, this enabled the countries of the eastern Mediterranean to improve their relations with Mussolini's country. This does not mean that these countries trust Italy too much. But so long as Great Britain can afford to be signatory to a gentleman's agreement with Mussolini, why should the smaller countries not take the opportunity to conclude an armistice? And only time will tell whether this armistice can develop into peace.

## CHAPTER XXI

### MUSSOLINI MAKES A GESTURE

WHEN in February, 1923, the Little Entente States decided to establish by statute the Permanent Council of the Little Entente, and when the Balkan countries clubbed together their political and military resources in the Balkan Entente, it was obvious that Italy's dictator would be obliged to make a counter-gesture. Thus, in March, 1934, the Rome Protocols were brought into existence, as an answer to the statutes of the Little and Balkan Ententes.

The Duce was responsible, however, only for the political part of this grouping. The economic side of it was the creation of an Austrian Minister, Doctor Richard Schueller. At every trade treaty negotiation for four decades, this small, vivacious, pleasant-mannered gentleman has been either Austria's representative or at least a member of the delegation. Schueller comes of a family of Jewish origin, the majority of whose members have been bankers. His brother was for many years the manager of a prominent private bank in Vienna. But Richard Schueller chose the career of a civil servant, and became a member of the staff of that section of the Ministry of Commerce which had to deal with the trade treaty negotiations. Even before the war he was entrusted with important trade negotiations on behalf of Austria, and after the war he took over the section of the Foreign Office in Vienna which deals with the conclusion of trade treaties.

This was certainly difficult in post-war years. Schueller once said to me, 'You know, before the war trade treaties were concluded for twelve years, and they were kept. Now we conclude treaties for twelve months, and as a rule notice is given by one side or the other after six months.'

And he told how seriously people took their duty before the war. Thus, when, after the loss of the Lombard and Venetian provinces in 1866, Austria concluded her trade treaty with Italy, on the basis of

the peace conditions Northern Italian wine from the old provinces was permitted to enter Austria duty free. Almost a million gallons of wine were involved. But Italy had no casks or barrels for export; hence this clause of the trade treaty remained a dead letter. It was renewed with every trade treaty, when suddenly in one year almost a quarter of a million gallons of Italian wine was exported to Austria. This was a serious blow to the Austrian, especially to the Merano and to the Lower-Austrian vineyards, but there was nothing to do! The treaty was valid for another eight years, and there you were! In those days treaties were made to be kept!

This Austrian negotiator has indomitable energy and incredible resourcefulness. He has an indestructible humour, and a vitality such as younger men could envy. At the first Stresa Conference I saw him dancing all night long, and night after night, though he was well over sixty then. He has a remarkable memory. All items of every trade treaty he knows by heart, much to the chagrin of his subordinates. He used to go to conferences without any documents, and remembered all items agreed upon. There were no written documents and the officials at home had to wait until he returned to Vienna and dictated the whole treaty from memory. This man, who before the war was accustomed to conclude trade treaties for an empire of fifty-five million people, was somewhat bored by the greatly reduced field of action in little Austria. But trade conditions became very complicated; and this has compensated him for the loss of 'territory.' Thus in his idle time he thought out the scheme which was to become the system known as the Rome Protocols. But this we will discuss later.

Austria, as we know, was in a difficult economic situation after the war. What could be the solution? Three possibilities were frequently discussed: (1) the *Anschluss*; (2) restoration of the Habsburgs; and (3) Danubian economic co-operation.

The first question, that of a union of Austria and Germany, is a very old one, and this we have discussed in the chapter on the 'Rise of National Socialism.' When, however, in November, 1918, the Habsburg Empire collapsed, small Austria was desirous of uniting her lot with the great German Reich. In both countries democratic régimes had been established; in both States the Socialists had a predominant word in shaping the destinies of the new Republics; and when on November 12, 1918, the Republic was proclaimed in

Austria, a resolution was inserted into the Constitution that 'the Germanic-Austrian Republic was part of the democratic German Republic.'

The Supreme Council in Versailles, however, was of a different opinion, and forced Austria to strike this sentence from the records. Despite the clause in the Saint Germain Treaty, which stated that 'Austria cannot forfeit her independence,' the Austrian population did not cease to look across the frontier. On April 24, 1921, eighteen months after the signing of the treaty, a plebiscite held in the Tyrol recorded a vote of over ninety per cent in favour of union with Germany. A few weeks later, Salzburg voted the same.

A loan of the League of Nations, agreed upon in October, 1922, aimed at the security of this 'independence.' But the League loan, followed by another nine years later, proved to be only a palliative, and when the economic situation in Austria again became precarious, another attempt was made to circumvent the treaty prohibition — the customs union between Germany and Austria, which was published on March 21, 1931. The Germans argued that only the political independence of Austria was 'guaranteed' by the Peace Treaty. France, bent on frustrating this union at any price, brought the question before the League and then before the Hague International Court. This high court ruled against the customs union scheme, but not because of Article 88 of the Treaty — the majority opinion was based on the Geneva loan protocol of October, 1922, which contained a passage in which Austria pledged not to forfeit her economic independence before 1943.

The situation changed considerably when in January, 1933, the Austrian-born Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany. In a later chapter I shall discuss this new situation, and also the Habsburg alternative, which is as taboo as the *Anschluss*.

There seems to remain only one solution to Austria's problem, namely, economic co-operation amongst the Danubian States. Ever since 1925 this question has occupied the minds of the various statesmen in Europe. But how to approach it? France was for multilateral pacts. Italy objected. 'Europe has suffered from an inflation of pacts,' remarked a statesman in Geneva, while another described 'pactomania' as Europe's greatest present ailment. And it is alleged that Mussolini coined the phrase: 'The last war was a war to end war; the next will be a war to end pacts!'

Multilateral pacts being considered impracticable by Italy, there remained the alternative of bi-lateral (and perhaps tri-lateral) treaties such as proposed by Mussolini. It was the world economic crisis which later on compelled the various Central and Southeastern European States to meditate on the possibility of a closer co-operation. And as the agricultural crisis showed its effects there earlier, and probably in the worst form, the three agricultural countries, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, met at a conference in Bucharest in June, 1930, to discuss ways and means for the alleviation of their plight. At the Warsaw conference in August of the same year, in addition to the countries already mentioned, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Finland, Latvia, and Esthonia also participated, but no real progress could be made.

While the agricultural countries had tried to come to an arrangement amongst themselves, Austria had already made repeated efforts in 1925 to obtain preferential tariffs in the trade treaties with Italy, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. But the most favoured nation clause of her trade treaties was in the way of such a development, and each effort to obtain preferences met with a failure. This induced Schueller, in co-operation with the Italian trade treaty expert, Commandatore Alessandro Brocchi, to plan a new system for credit and transport facilities which, in spite of denials, did amount in reality to export premiums. In the old days, if one country granted such premiums to another, a third, as a rule, took counter-measures against it. Schueller and Brocchi now thought that if such a premium were granted only for certain quantities and for certain specially named goods, other nations would refrain from taking counter-action.

But before the two experts could come out with their scheme, suddenly the Austro-German customs union plan of Schober and Curtius frightened both the Great Powers and their small neighbours. While it was Italy's representative who gave the decisive vote at the Hague Court to kill the scheme, Italy realized that with pure negation nothing could be achieved — it was necessary to make a positive scheme to help Austria.

Immediately after the announcement of the Austro-German customs union plan, Brocchi, with the consent of the Duce, closeted himself with Schueller, and they prepared to put on the map their long-discussed scheme about a tripartite co-operation between Italy,

Austria, and Hungary on the basis of credit facilities and freight reductions. Mussolini naturally was ready to make the gesture. A three-cornered treaty between Italy, Austria, and Hungary was signed on the Semmering in May, 1931, and it probably would have created as much furor in Europe as did the customs union scheme two months before, if another event which occurred thirty-six hours after the Semmering Agreement had not detracted world attention from it. This event was the crisis of the Credit Anstalt in Vienna. The Semmering Treaty, however, became valid in 1932, in March of which year the French launched the Tardieu plan which proposed an economic co-operation among the five Danubian countries — Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. At the Four Power Conference in London (April, 1932) which was called to discuss the Tardieu plan, Great Britain was undecided because her hands were already tied by the coming Ottawa Conference which contemplated the establishment of a preferential tariff system between England and her Dominions. Italy suspected a political scheme and feared that Czechoslovakia would gain the supremacy in the co-operation of the five countries. Germany objected to the Tardieu plan, but declared herself willing to grant one-sided preferential tariffs for Austrian industrial products and for Southeastern European agricultural goods. France saw in this offer the revival of the ill-fated Austro-German customs union scheme under another disguise, and refused to accept the German offer.

The Stresa Conference in September, 1932, started with ambitious plans, fifteen countries, including the European Great Powers, being represented, but in the end the results dwindled to mere recommendations about preferences in favour of Austria and a scheme of indirect preferences for Southeastern European grain. This was exactly what Schueller and Brocchi wanted.

Nevertheless, not all Italians knew the importance of these recommendations. In Stresa I had an opportunity to talk with one of the leading Italian delegates. Apropos my query about the fate of the conference, he answered: 'You know, we are the hosts here and so we must be polite. But, between ourselves, the conference should and must declare itself a failure, and the sooner the better.'

A year later Mussolini, faced with the German threat to Austria, and compelled to act for Central-European co-operation, took the



results of Stresa and made them the basis of his Danubian memorandum. In the meantime Schueller and Brocchi had remained busy behind the scenes, while as visible development some interesting visits of statesmen followed. At Easter, 1933, as we have seen, Dollfuss flew to Italy and saw Mussolini. One could assume that while the German danger was probably in the forefront of the conversations, the economic measures to counteract German expansion in these parts were also discussed. A few weeks later the Hungarian Premier Goemboes took the train for Rome. In August, 1933, little Dollfuss once more flew to Italy.

These were the known and much-heralded visits. But in the meantime Schueller also had visited Mussolini and had had long conversations with Goemboes. The shrewd Austrian economist showed the Hungarian Prime Minister that the system by which Goemboes was trying to help the peasants was wrong. In Hungary in those days the system of the *boletta* (scrip) was in effect. This system consisted of an outright subsidy to the farmers, of about three pengoes (two shillings sixpence) for each metric hundredweight of wheat. When the Hungarian grain crop amounted to about twenty million metric hundredweights, this subsidy was an expensive proposition. Schueller told Goemboes that this system was not only expensive, but ineffective, because it did not help exports. Schueller, therefore, proposed to the Hungarian Premier not to pay the *boletta* at home, but to arrange commercial treaties in which Hungary would be able to place her export surplus at high prices. The Hungarian harvest surplus, as a rule, amounted to five million metric hundredweights. Goemboes realized that these recommendations were wise. When, therefore, on March 17, 1934, Goemboes and Dollfuss jointly visited the Duce, the Italian Premier could make his gesture, and the result was the signing of the Rome Protocols, the detailed supplementary agreements of which were signed on May 14.

In the Roman Protocols Austria obtained one-sided preferential tariffs from Italy for one hundred five products, amongst them being iron, wood, and so forth, while many other products received preferences in form under the Brocchi-Schueller scheme. Italy and Austria consented to take over four million metric hundredweights of wheat from Hungary at agreed high prices, thus solving Hungary's wheat problem, as the rest of Hungary's surplus had already been sold to Switzerland and to Germany.

This system was further developed in the spring of 1936 on the occasion of the joint visit of Goemboes and Schuschnigg to Rome. Since the conclusion of the Rome Pacts, Austria has made other treaties with open or indirect preferences. With Germany, of course, no preferential negotiations have been possible since the ascent of Hitler to power, but Austria could conclude a preferential agreement with France about wood and timber. Also she obtained preference-like privileges from Poland, in the form of refunding of certain tariffs, while a similar treaty was concluded with Czechoslovakia in 1936.

The Rome Pacts, of course, suffered from the currency shortage in Italy. During the sanctions crisis Italy bought mostly in non-sanction States, and Austria's trade with Italy increased very considerably by the end of 1935 and at the beginning of 1936. At present an arrangement is in existence between Austria and Italy, according to which after each three months the lire debts are cleared.

The Rome Pacts contained a provision that the three contracting partners were willing to make similar treaties with other countries as well. But these other neighbouring countries were somewhat frightened.

Under the present circumstances one can observe the growth of two economic (and also political) groups: a Central-European co-operation, the nucleus of which is the Rome Pacts and in which perhaps even Czechoslovakia may find her place one of these days; and the Balkan Pacts, in which the Southeastern European countries — Yugoslavia, Rumania, Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria — may try to unite and improve their economic existence and to preserve peace in this powder-box of Europe.

## CHAPTER XXII

### BERLIN ATTEMPTS TO BALKANIZE VIENNA

A NEIGHBOUR of Germany's, speaking the same language, Austria was bound to feel the results of the national movement in Germany. Yet, though Pan-German feeling was, as we have seen, always strong in Austria, the growth of the Austrian National Socialist movement was only partly due to nationalist sentiment. The youth of the country, which knew nothing of the glory that was Vienna in the old days, and which had not been in the war, was dissatisfied with prevailing economic conditions. Since the Communist movement was very weak, and the Socialists could never obtain a firm footing in the countryside, the National Socialist agitation easily won supporters. The middle classes, on the other hand, with the exception of a section of the provincial intelligentsia, have suddenly become fanatic 'old Austrians.'

The Dollfuss Government, looking at the fate of the Bruening and Schleicher Governments, and that of Doctor Held in Bavaria, was naturally on guard. Vienna, after all, was already a fine town when Berlin was still only a small fishing village inhabited by Slavs; and the Viennese, conscious that their city had been for nine hundred years an important centre of German culture, always looked with a slight contempt on 'parvenu' Berlin. But Berlin had become the capital of a united Germany, and the Germans in the capital of the Third Reich intended to capture the last remaining important bulwark of Germanism outside the boundaries of the Reich. On the other hand, the 'conquest' of Bavaria was a warning to the rulers of little Austria, and they began a desperate effort to assure their own independence and integrity.

The Hitlerite victories in Germany had had a strong repercussion in Austria. The National Socialist movement had grown rapidly in this country. In the municipal elections in 1931 in Innsbruck the

Nazis had polled almost fifteen thousand votes out of a total of thirty-six thousand. In other parts of the country the growth of the movement had been almost as rapid. The *Heimwehr* in Styria had effected a working arrangement with the Nazis in 1932, and had recognized Adolf Hitler as their chief. The leaders of the Nazi movement in Vienna had told me at the beginning of 1933 that they expected, if national elections were held, to obtain at least forty of the one hundred sixty-five seats in the Austrian Parliament.

In those days the Nazis had forty thousand registered members in Vienna. They were very strong in Carinthia and Salzburg, and fairly strong in other provinces. Moreover, they were the only determined and ruthless group in Austrian politics. The leader of the movement in Austria at the beginning of 1933 was Adolf Hitler, Frauenfeld, the commander of the Austrian group, having the rank only of a *Gausaf* — that is, district leader. Austria was considered then the eighth *Gau* (district) of Germany. Frauenfeld, in turn, was placed under the supervision of the Prussian Reichstag member, Theo Habicht, who established his headquarters in Linz.

After the Nazi 'conquest' of Bavaria, the Austrian Government became seriously alarmed. The new Roman Catholic Archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal Theodor Innitzer, went quickly to consult his colleague in Munich (Cardinal Faulhaber), and then proceeded to Rome. In Rome the Vatican and the Quirinal were united in one thing: Austria must not become the prey of National Socialism. A union of Germany and Austria would mean that Berlin had control of the Brenner Pass; and a militant Germany on the Brenner would in turn mean a push toward Trieste and Venice sooner or later. Italy has always wanted a neutral or independent Austria between her and the sixty-five million Germans.

In 1931 and 1932, Italy began to watch with grave anxiety the Pan-German efforts in Austria and the subsequent growth of National Socialism. In 1932 Mussolini the realist had tried to come to terms with Germany about Austria (which he succeeded in attaining only four years later, however). Mussolini's confidential agent in those days was Signor Eugenio Morreale, acquaintance with whom we made in a previous chapter. Through Morreale, Mussolini adopted the *Heimwehr* as the only outspoken Fascist organization on the Italian pattern in Austria. In the middle of 1932, Morreale went to Munich to negotiate with Hitler about Austria. The offer

of Morreale would have permitted a co-operation between the two Fascist countries, such as was foreseen in *Mein Kampf*; but Morreale's demands that Hitler should recognize the independence of Austria proved too strong a medicine. According to his *sine-qua-non* terms, Austria was to remain independent, with Italy recognizing the German character of the Austrian State. In her internal politics she was to be *gleichgeschaltet* (assimilated) to the future National Socialist Germany, with the one exception that, instead of the already existing secret Nazi storm troops, the *Heimwehr* was to be recognized as the only substitute for the *Sturm Abteilung* and the *Schutzstaffl*. This would have meant: Austria was to be *gleichgeschaltet*, with her storm troops under Italian control.

If Hitler had been a more flexible and adaptable politician, he certainly would have agreed to the Italian terms. After all, on second thought, the Tyrol *Heimwehr* was anti-Italian to the backbone and pro-German in all its particles. Hence Italy's command would in time have been killed by the Austrians themselves. The Styrian *Heimwehr*, under the command of Waldemar Pfriemer, in that year accepted Hitler as its leader and concluded an alliance with the Nazis. The Salzburg *Heimwehr's* commander was Franz Hueber, a brother-in-law of General Goering. Many of the sub-leaders in Lower Austria, like Baron Carl Alberti, had outspoken Nazi sympathies. Nothing would have been easier than to command the illegal *Sturm Abteilung* and *Schutzstaffl* formations to join the *Heimwehr* and Nazify it from within. But Hitler was a man of fanatically fixed principles. This would have been, in his eyes, a betrayal of the 'greatly-suffering and well-tried old warriors,' who, since the days after the war, had been rallying to his standards. It would have meant sacrificing Theo Habicht. This he could not do. Hitler's mind is unfathomable. Sometimes he is grateful to old comrades to the point of harming himself; at other times, as on June 30, he shoots them down in cold blood. This time he committed a grave mistake. The refusal of the Italian offer was flinging the gauntlet into the face of Italy; and Mussolini accepted the challenge.

Fortified by Italian support, Austria now took up the fight against German Nazi penetration. The German Nazis began work with the help of propaganda and terror. But, though Bavaria had been easily overrun by a few battalions of Brown Shirts, a similar procedure was more difficult in Austria. The extremist wing, of course,

recommended such a solution; the more moderate warned: 'And what about Italy? She may march into Austria to protect her.'

Immediately after the German elections of March, 1933 (after which Dollfuss felt compelled to abolish Parliament in Austria and resort to dictatorship), the danger of a march of German storm troops into Austria appeared imminent. On March 8, the Austrian Government newspapers reported that a plot, aimed at the overthrow of the Austrian régime by the invasion of sixty thousand storm troops from Bavaria, accompanied by one hundred fifty Nazi agitators, had been discovered. The Nazis were almost certain of an early victory; Nazi insolence went so far that the Austrian Nazi leader declared: 'Our Chancellor's name is Hitler, and not Dollfuss.' When I questioned him about the introduction of dictatorship measures by Dollfuss, Frauenfeld bluntly stated: 'We are glad to see something started at last. Whatever may be the motive of the Government action, it is certain to help us — for it means that things finally have begun to move.' And he added smilingly: 'We have all Germany behind us and we cannot be halted. We can afford to wait, for we have not to wait too long.'

This confidence of the local leader animated all the Nazis in Austria. It remains to me an enigma how Dollfuss's nerves could withstand such a pressure. But he was convinced that Heaven was helping him against the 'devilish' foe. And the *Oesterreichisches Wunder* once more came to pass: the resistance of Dollfuss, with Mussolini supporting him, could withstand the onslaught of Nazi Germany.

Germany, of course, became annoyed by this Austrian resistance. Huge sums (more than a million pounds in the first six months of 1933, it is said) were spent by the Germans for Nazi propaganda in Austria. This propaganda achieved much, especially after Hitler came to power; but subsequent events in Germany served also as a warning to many Austrians.

When, at the beginning of May, it was once more revealed that another *coup* was in preparation in which thirty thousand storm troops were to march from Bavaria into Austria to be received there by their Austrian comrades, the storm troops were suppressed in Austria; and some days later the party uniforms were prohibited. The uniforms of storm troop and defence corps (or Black Guards — one brown, the other blue-black) were very becoming; and, deprived

of them, many dashing young Austrian Nazis were badly hit in their vanity.

The counter-measures adopted by the Nazis against these uniform prohibitions was an attempt to ridicule the decree. The young Nazis now appeared in the streets dressed in evening clothes and top hats and wearing the swastika. The newsboys, who, in reality, were mostly storm troopers, wore, instead of the brown uniform, a top hat.

Then the Government forbade political meetings. The Nazis tried to circumvent the prohibition by arranging 'scientific and literary meetings,' at which they attempted to speak in allegories. Thus, on the occasion of the two hundred fiftieth anniversary of the liberation of Vienna from the Turks, they arranged a meeting in commemoration; and, though the speeches were apparently all historical, without any actual mention of a political name, the listeners knew that the 'Turks' were the actual Austrian Government, and that a certain 'Turkish Pasha,' whose name was often mentioned, was a living person.

Though it was an intensely difficult period, full of excitement and nervous tensions, the eternal Vienna jokes grew like mushrooms after rain. Many were directed against the Nazis, some against the Government. If the Nazis smeared on the walls, *Heil Hitler*, the Socialists always corrected it to *Heilt Hitler* (cure Hitler). Some of the jokes were made at the expense of the fact that Hitler in the former Austrian parts was often the name of Jews, too. An Austrian afternoon paper tried to make it appear that Hitler was of Jewish extraction, but the evidence was not only unconvincing, but based simply on hearsay. Some Austrian Nazis were travelling in a railway train, one of the jokes ran; and in the compartment there was a Jew with a large dark beard and side-whiskers. Every time when a Nazi left the compartment, to smoke a cigarette in the corridor, he raised his hand before the Jew to the Hitler salute and said: 'Heil Hitler.' The Jew remained modestly seated in his corner, but when, for the umpteenth time, a Nazi greeted him with 'Heil Hitler,' he said: 'I am deeply touched by your attention. But how did you find out that my name is Hitler?'

The Nazi jokes were, of course, concocted at the expense of the Government, Chancellor Dollfuss being the butt of many. The Chancellor, however, had a keen sense of humour and he liked to describe himself as the smallest Premier of Europe.

'There will be stamps issued commemorating the two hundred fiftieth celebration of Vienna's liberation from the Turks,' said a friend to me.

I suspected nothing and asked innocently what would be on the stamps.

'Of course, the life-sized figure of Dollfuss,' was the answer.

In the middle of May, 1933, came an affair which greatly complicated Austro-German relations. In April the Bavarian Minister, Doctor Hans Frank, broadcast a speech in Munich in which he not only insulted the Austrian Government, but also alluded to a possible occupation of Austria by the Bavarians. Then suddenly it was announced that several German Ministers, amongst them Doctor Frank, would visit Vienna, apparently with the view of giving moral support to the Austrian Nazis. The Austrians warned that the visit of a man who had insulted the Austrians was undesirable. Despite this the Ministers arrived by airplane in Vienna, where they were informed by a high police officer that their visit was undesirable. There were big Nazi demonstrations, and the police forced the Ministers to take routes which they did not wish to use. Most of the party returned the next day to Berlin, but Doctor Frank proceeded to Graz and at a private meeting invited Austrian civil servants to open a campaign of disobedience against the Austrian Government. Thereupon Doctor Frank's expulsion was decided. By this time he was motoring between Graz and Salzburg. At Saint Gilgen a police officer informed him that he must leave the country. When he arrived in Salzburg, he wished to address a crowd of Nazis in a beer-garden, but the police superintendent prevented him by demanding that he leave the country immediately. Doctor Frank asked to be permitted to take a light meal, and this request was granted; but when another attempt was made to address a crowd of Nazis who had assembled before the café the police superintendent said: 'I demand in the name of the Austrian Government that you abstain from making any speech. If you do not adhere to the instructions, you will be responsible for the consequences.' Thus at nightfall Doctor Frank left Austria.

Soon after that the Germans took reprisals in the form of imposing a tax of one thousand marks (fifty pounds) on German tourists visiting Austria. In reply, the Austrian Government decided that all



Austrian citizens wishing to travel to Germany must ask for a special permit. Searches were made at the various Brown Houses in Austria, and the pressure on the Nazis was increasing. Dollfuss flew to Italy on a week-end early in June, to meet Mussolini; and, apparently encouraged by his Italian protector, he began to increase the counter-terror against the Nazi terror. Thereupon the Nazis decided to adopt *comitadji* methods in their fights, and in the middle of June bombs and explosives were used by the Nazis in their terror campaign.

A bomb was thrown into a jeweller's shop in the suburbs, killing the owner instantly and mortally injuring a second person. Attempts with explosives were made at the Parliament and the Vienna City Hall without causing great damage. Three persons made an attempt on the life of Richard Steidle, the Tyrolese *Heimwehr* leader. As an answer to this terrorism, the Government, at an extraordinary Cabinet meeting, decided to occupy with the police all Brown Houses and Nazi headquarters in Austria; to expel all foreign Nazis; and to dissolve the Nazi organizations in the army. As one of the measures, the Nazi leader, the Prussian Theo Habicht, was arrested. The Germans retaliated and arrested the press chief of the Austrian Legation in Berlin, Doctor Erwin Wasserboeck, a Roman Catholic priest who was protected by diplomatic immunity. Doctor Wasserboeck's arrest served the purpose of obtaining Habicht's release, although he was compelled to leave Austria. Amongst the almost twelve hundred Nazis who were arrested in these June days in Vienna were seven judges, three public prosecutors, fifty-two school-teachers, thirty-seven gendarmerie officials, sixty-one railwaymen, eighty-one mayors of towns, one hundred eleven aldermen, and thirty-seven lawyers.

The terror instituted by the Nazis was intensified. Day after day there were sabotage acts on the various railway lines of Austria. Bombs were exploded near bridges. In the various parts of the town *Boellers* (small paper sacks filled with explosives) were exploded, the noise and din driving terror into the inhabitants. Bombs went off in the cafés, killing some and injuring many. Then some *Heimwehr* people were killed by a Nazi bomb outrage in Krems. In a proclamation to the *Heimwehr*, Prince Starhemberg, after summarizing the recent acts of Nazi terrorism, issued the following order to his men:

'In future, members of the *Heimatschutz*, in an emergency, make use of your weapons without compunction against the murderous Brown beasts, as the law authorizes you to do.'

The terror, with all its violence, however, continued. In August a Government organ, the *Reichspost*, published documents which had been seized by the Vienna police and which showed the complicity of Berlin and Munich in these bomb outrages.

The way in which Dollfuss resisted these attacks really commanded admiration. In the first month of this fight the Austrian Government was struggling with handicaps such as were hardly realized in the world. Although only approximately one quarter of the population was in sympathy with Nazi Germany, eighty per cent of the officials, including almost all the higher officials, were Nazis. The police were Nazis at the beginning of the fight, as were the gendarmerie. And yet Dollfuss dared to take up the fight. If Hitler was a fanatic of the creed which he personally created, Dollfuss was an equally fanatic defender of the faith of his own Holy Roman Catholic Church. He possessed the courage and fanaticism of a crusader, and only this explains how he dared oppose his Austrian-born opponent in Germany.

But time worked wonders. The Nazi police, when ordered to do so, cracked the heads of the Nazis with the same severity as they did those of Communists. Government officials were forced to swear a new oath of allegiance to the Government, and those civil servants who were found to be partisans of the Nazis or committed breaches of faith in favour of the National Socialists were dismissed.

The Nazis then decided to take a 'terrible' revenge on the Government: at the proposal of some Krems Nazis it was decided to sabotage the Government by ceasing to smoke! The manufacture of cigars, cigarettes, and pipe-tobacco is in the hands of the Austrian Federal State Tobacco Monopoly. Therefore, it was argued, if such an important group as the Nazis should decide not to smoke, this would badly hit the Austrian Government's pocket. The calculation was a failure: The organizers forgot that most of their followers were seventeen and eighteen years of age, and were thus in most cases non-smokers, anyhow. After one year's boycott of the Austrian Tobacco Monopoly there was hardly any appreciable drop of this revenue.

But it was in the autumn of that same year, 1933, that the Nazis

struck their most serious blow at Dollfuss; a blow which miscarried, for it was not until the following year that they succeeded in assassinating him.

The seat of the conspiracy was Schladming, in Northwestern Styria, where a German Prince, who afterward escaped to Germany, was the leader of the storm troops. A young ex-soldier, Rudolf Drtil, who belonged to the same S.S. formation as the actual murderers of Dollfuss ten months later, was chosen for the murder. It was planned to send him to Vienna to murder the Chancellor on September 30. The murder was to have served as a signal for the rising.

In conformity with the plan, Drtil went to Vienna on September 30, but the Chancellor had left Vienna for Wolfpassing to spend his week-end holidays with his family. The conspirators in Styria, sure of Drtil's success, waited confidently for the news of the murder. When this failed to come, they faked a report that Dollfuss had been murdered, that a rising had broken out in Carinthia, and that the Nazi storm troops were already engaged in Judenburg, in Styria. The rising collapsed because of the timely intervention of gendarmes, who intercepted the revolters before they could reach their arms depots, but Drtil managed to approach Dollfuss in the lobby of the Parliament three days later, October 3, and fired two shots at him, wounding him slightly.

Drtil was tried and sentenced to five years' hard labour (he has since been pardoned), but the presiding judge did not investigate the connection between Drtil and the conspirators in Styria. This was a grave mistake, for the identity of the rebels of July, 1934, with the plotters of September, 1933, is now evident.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### FASCISM ORGANIZES CIVIL STRIFE IN VIENNA

THE tragedy of 'Red' Vienna was that Karl Marx's famous axiom, 'The proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains,' is no longer true in the twentieth century, and especially not in Vienna. We have sketched in a previous chapter the magnificent achievements of the Social Democratic Government of Vienna; we have surveyed the unprecedented and unequalled work that this régime did for the workers, for the child, for the health of the population, for sanitation, and for general welfare. It is true that the richer classes were obliged to pay high taxes to maintain this work; but even these taxes were only a fraction of what London capitalists must pay, proportionately as well as absolutely. The Vienna middle class, however, developed a curious hatred against this nominally Socialist, in reality only Social-Reformist régime; for years the *Heimwehr* and the Christian Social Party conducted a vigorous and violent warfare in Parliament and also in the bourgeois press against 'Marxist Vienna.'

The rich manufacturers loathed the Socialists because they objected to the various trade-union rules which were identified with the party; and in order to prepare for the abolition of the Socialist trade unions, the *Heimwehr* was financed by the rich manufacturers, especially by some very anti-Socialist factory owners, like Fritz Mandl, manager of the Hirtenberg Munition Works. Other anti-Socialists coveted the many thousands of jobs which the party in control of Vienna could offer to its supporters. One must not forget that the Municipality of Vienna was the largest single enterprise in Austria, owning, besides many hundreds of houses, large areas of land, a huge brewery, electricity and gas works, a huge slaughter-house, the tramways, and the Vienna autobusses. These works together employed more than sixty thousand hands. Moreover, the contractors who sup-

plied the goods to the various undertakings were also dependent on the favour of those who ruled. Thus, there was a huge group in Vienna, especially amongst the bourgeoisie, who thought that a change of régime in the City Hall would benefit them. But a change of régime by democratic means was not possible: so great were the achievements of the Municipality that at any election the Social Democrats could count on a two-thirds majority. They reasoned, therefore: 'If you cannot effect a change by democratic methods, try it by force.' And, for this reason, the dissatisfied middle classes backed the *Heimwehr* movement.

This fight against the Social Democrats took a more decisive turn after the unfortunate revolt of the masses in Vienna on July 15, 1927, which was exploited by the *Heimwehr*, and to a lesser extent by the Christian Socials, as an organized attempt of Bolshevism to conquer the country. This propaganda also won over large groups of the peasantry to the campaign against the Social Democrats. Until the year 1927 the Social Democrats in Austria had the advantage of the initiative. They were the strongest party in the Parliament, and even at the elections in the spring of 1927 they obtained more than forty-two per cent of the total votes of the country; but they committed the capital mistake of not wishing to accept the responsibility of national rule and left the Government to the weaker Christian Social Party which ruled through a coalition with the Pan-Germans.

In the late summer of 1927, this strong party was forced into a defensive position. Through this it lost its *élan*, and the numerically inferior Christian Social Party, in co-operation with the Fascist *Heimwehr*, could challenge the might of the Socialists almost everywhere. The years 1928 and 1929 looked especially menacing for the Socialists because the claims and demands of the *Heimwehr* became more pressing. The *Heimwehr* movement continued to grow, and Chancellor Seipel spoke of it as 'this irresistible movement of the people.' In November, 1930, the Vaugoin Government, in which the *Heimwehr* leader Prince Starhemberg was Minister of the Interior, held elections. The 'irresistible' Fascist movement went to the polls as an independent party, and received 227,000 votes; that is, only six per cent of the total votes polled.

The rift between the bourgeois and Socialist parties in the Austrian Parliament, however, had become so deep that there was no possibility of bringing about an understanding. One must say that in the

years 1931 and 1932 great mistakes were committed by the Austrian Social Democratic leaders. Their situation was dangerous, not because of losses suffered at home, but because of the international situation. In Hungary there had been a 'White' Government, thoroughly anti-Socialist, since 1919. Austria's southern neighbour, Italy, had been ruled by a Fascist régime since 1922, and the Austrian Chancellors were compelled to adopt an increasingly friendly policy toward Mussolini's Italy. In Germany, National Socialism was making rapid headway; and when, in September, 1930, Hitler obtained his six million votes (which was an omen of things to come), the Austrian Socialist leaders should have realized that the time had come to demand the minimum and effect an agreement which they could have called a 'peace with honour.' But unfortunately, there was nobody amongst the leaders who had courage or authority to dictate such a policy. Most of the Socialists of the Right wing, and naturally the moderate bourgeoisie who wanted to save the Social-Democratic Party, attribute this failure to reach a compromise in those fateful years to the radicalism of Doctor Otto Bauer, the ablest amongst the theoretical pillars of the party. I think that this accusation is not quite justified. As far as one could gather, the failure to reach a compromise was due more to a misunderstanding within the party than to the radical, uncompromising attitude of Bauer. No doubt, Bauer was the most dominating figure in the party, and his views were considered rather radical. Under his influence Austria kept for a long time the fiction about the second-and-a-half International which was, at least to a great extent, of Bauer's making. On the Left wing of the Party with Bauer was Doctor Julius Deutsch, the leader of the *Republikanischer Schutzbund* — the Guards of the Republic — a Socialist armed organization for the protection of the democratic régime, such as was the *Reichsbanner* in Germany; on the Right wing were the Lower-Austrian Socialist leaders, Schneeberger, Helmer, Popp, and Schneidmadl, who were continuously for compromise and for a moderate policy. In the middle stood, as mediator, the Socialist Mayor of Vienna, Seitz. Bauer thought that somebody in the party had to represent an apparently irreconcilable and uncompromising attitude — for appearances' sake, to avoid compromising the party before the radical masses. But he hoped that the willingness for compromise of the Right wing would win. I can remember that when I met him in 1932 in the editorial offices of the

*Arbeiter Zeitung*, he appeared absolutely certain that the time for radical experiments was over. It was impossible to make a general strike, he argued, when there were half a million unemployed. He told me that he would like to retire and leave the leadership to the young generation if only this could be done with honour.

The Right wing of the party, however, took all the demands and arguments of Bauer literally; they were afraid to disown him (though Bauer would have loved to be voted down), and thus the last two chances for an honourable settlement were missed. When Chancellor Ender promised a clandestine truce to the Socialists if they would vote him full powers, they passed up the opportunity of a lifetime. Ender is from Vorarlberg, a province of Austria where the population is kindred to that of Switzerland and is thus permeated by the democratic spirit. The Socialists knew that Ender was a true democrat, and yet they refused this full power, for reasons which I have explained above. Once more they failed to effect a compromise with Doctor Karl Buresch, a perhaps somewhat corrupt yet democratically inclined Chancellor. The rigid attitude of the Socialists caused the fall of the Buresch Cabinet in the spring of 1932, and when young Engelbert Dollfuss made his coalition with the *Heimwehr*, it was, alas, too late! The Socialists should have made every sacrifice rather than let the Fascists enter the Government, thus assuring their control over the police and enabling them to convert their semi-military organizations into a kind of auxiliary police. Here began the real tragedy of the Austrian Social Democrats.

From May 16, 1932, when Dollfuss became Federal Chancellor, the Socialists acted blamelessly. They tried everything and went as far in their conciliatory attitude as it was possible for them to go.

When in the year 1933, Hitler came to power in Germany, the Socialists decided that Austria could survive as an independent State only if the then still democratic Christian Socials would join forces with the Social Democrats in combating National Socialism. Dollfuss's attempt to eliminate Parliament in March, 1933, was a great blow to the Socialists, but they continued to try everything in their power to reach a compromise with the Government. Thus, in the autumn of 1933, the Social Democrats renewed their effort for a reconciliation. Dollfuss said that he was ready to negotiate with the Lower-Austrian Socialists, who were the most moderate in the

party. In October, 1933, the Social-Democratic-Party wanted to call an extraordinary party meeting in Vienna, but they heard that Emil Fey (who was then Under-Secretary in the Cabinet) intended to dissolve the meeting. To prevent this, the Socialists asked Vice-Chancellor Franz Winkler (who was a member of the *Landbund*, a small party belonging to the Government coalition) to intervene on their behalf. Attempts to reach Dollfuss failed. Then one of the Lower-Austrian deputies called on the Under-Secretary for Public Security, Baron Karl Karwinsky, who promised to arrange a meeting with Dollfuss. But Dollfuss did not wish to negotiate directly with any Socialist, because he was terrified of the *Heimwehr*. The Austrian Fascists, if they heard that anybody from the Government side dared to negotiate with the Socialists, immediately started a campaign of abuse against him. Next day the Lower-Austrian Socialist was asked to come to Dollfuss's flat in the Stallburggasse (where he was recuperating from the Drtil attempt on his life a few days earlier); the Socialist was not admitted into the bedroom. The negotiations were conducted by Baron Karwinsky who acted as *parlementaire*, running from one room into the other, taking the messages from and to the Chancellor. The party meeting was then permitted. Baron Karwinsky told this Lower-Austrian Socialist that the Chancellor wished to negotiate with him after the party meeting was over.

The Socialist leader then urged such a meeting every week, but Baron Karwinsky always said that Dollfuss had no time, and the day for the negotiations was pushed from one week to another. Meanwhile, democratically oriented members of the Christian Social Party, like the former Minister of Finance, Josef Kollmann, the former State Secretary, Doctor Wayhs, the Provincial Governor of Lower Austria, Josef Reither, were approached and begged to induce Dollfuss to negotiate with the Socialists. Valuable weeks were lost, but Dollfuss showed no inclination to receive the Socialist deputies.

On January 3, 1934, Josef Reither told the Lower-Austrian Socialist leaders that Richard Schmitz (now Mayor of Vienna) had been empowered by Dollfuss to conduct negotiations. Apparently there was already a slight inclination in Dollfuss at least to tolerate a Socialist trade-unionist at the head of the Chamber of Labour. Then suddenly the all-powerful Fritz Mandl stepped in and de-



clared that if a Socialist trade-unionist majority were accepted in the Vienna Chamber, the *Heimwehr* would leave the Government.

During the negotiations with Christian Social Party men, the Socialists learned that Dollfuss would negotiate with them only if they would discard the radical leaders, such as Otto Bauer, and if the moderate Lower-Austrian Socialists were entrusted with the negotiations. On January 10, 1934 — that is, more than a month before the terrible civil war — the National Executive of the Social Democratic Party of Austria held a joint session with the Lower-Austrian Party Executive, at which Otto Bauer, Doctor Danneberg, Mayor Karl Seitz, Alderman Richter, and Doctor Schaerf, as well as the Lower Austrians Helmer (then Vice-Governor of Lower Austria), Petznek, Schneeberger, and Schneidmadl were present. This meeting authorized the Lower-Austrian members to act as fully empowered negotiators of the party, and next day Bauer handed over a *plein pouvoir* (duly signed by the members of the Party Executive) to conduct negotiations with Dollfuss. Schneeberger was instructed to try to reach the Chancellor. The same day in the afternoon Schneeberger established contact with Baron Karwinsky, and later in the afternoon Hofrat Weber, who was probably the most intimate friend of Dollfuss, came to see Helmer. Hofrat Weber was informed that the Lower-Austrian negotiators were now equipped with full power by the National Executive. Hofrat Weber asked whether the Socialists insisted that the *Heimwehr* should be ousted from the Government. Helmer answered that the Socialists had no desire to influence the Chancellor as to the constitution of his Government. It was explained that the Socialist Party was ready to give up the claim to call Parliament together and to cease their demands for new elections. What they wished was the establishment of a *modus vivendi* between the Government and the Social Democratic Party, in order to defend Austria against the Nazi danger. After the establishment of a more peaceful atmosphere, a reform of the Constitution was to be attempted, in a way which would seek to combine the *staende* (corporative) State Constitutional Reform plan of Dollfuss with certain ideas represented in the Swiss Constitution. They demanded only the constitution of the corporative (*staende*) institutions on a democratic basis, and they accepted that a second chamber should be constituted on the basis of corporative chambers and of representation of the Provinces. They were ready

to permit an authoritative Government the constitution of which could be independent of party politics. The former Socialist Chancellor, Karl Renner, had already worked out a constitutional reform on the basis of these principles. Hofrat Weber was much impressed by all this and announced that he would see Dollfuss at once to permit a quick negotiation. An hour later, however, Hofrat Weber came back from the Chancellor and said that Dollfuss had no time to receive the Socialist negotiators.

This was about seven o'clock in the evening; and ten minutes later the Socialists went to see Baron Karwinsky in his office in the Herrengasse. They told him how necessary it was that a *modus vivendi* be reached. The present war on a double front against the Nazis and against the Socialists only further encouraged the Nazis. The Socialist leaders explained that the corporative ideas of the Papal Encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*, could be coupled with elements of the Swiss Constitution, thus preserving at least some liberties in an authoritatively ruled State. Such a vigorous ideology could be matched against the Nazi ideology, explained the Socialists. But Dollfuss, it seems, did not wish an honest peace with the Socialists: while finding no time to speak with the Socialist leaders on such an important question, he found time to appoint Major Emil Fey Minister of Public Security that very same night at eight-thirty! Thus, while the Socialists were negotiating with Karwinsky, the man then actually in charge of Public Security, their great enemy was being made full Minister of Public Security.

It seems that two days later, Dollfuss thought things over; and Josef Reither informed the Socialists that Dollfuss was now ready to negotiate. On the next day, January 14, Dollfuss actually received the Socialist leader Schneeberger, but no really concrete results could be attained. Three days later, Josef Kollmann (one of the Christian Social leaders) assured Schneidmadl that Dollfuss had no intention of taking further measures against the Socialists in Vienna.

But just when Dollfuss was beginning to realize the necessity for keeping contact with the Left, the fatal event happened: the Italian Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Signor Suvich, arrived in Vienna. In the light of later developments, it is evident that Suvich brought a message from Mussolini, who hated the Social Democrats, that they must be destroyed.

The Socialists had a conference with Dollfuss's predecessor,

Buresch, who later was Minister of Finance in the Cabinet, and this otherwise always conciliatory politician expressed to the Socialists his fears that it was too late! 'A half-year ago, you see, you could have had an agreement at a much cheaper price,' he said. And on January 27 another former Chancellor, Ramek, when speaking to a Lower-Austrian Socialist leader, said that he did not believe that the Chancellor really wished a reconciliation with the Socialists.

After this things followed one another quickly. On February 1, the Socialists learned that a *Heimwehr Putsch* in Innsbruck had abolished the elected local Government and established an appointive provisional Government, consisting of *Heimwehre*, 'Young Peasants' and *Sturmscharen* leaders, the latter being the formations of a Tyrolese deputy, Kurt von Schuschnigg.

On February 7, similar events took place in Styria, Upper Austria, and Burgenland. On the same day there occurred another fatal thing for the Socialists: Daladier's Cabinet fell in France. The Left Governments in France had extorted from Dollfuss a promise not to harass further the Vienna Municipality. This Dollfuss now thought to evade if another Government with a tendency more to the Right should come to power in France. One day later Dollfuss visited Budapest, leaving his Vice-Chancellor, Major Emil Fey, in charge of the Government.

On February 11, Major Fey ordered a search of the Socialist Party headquarters in Linz; and the more radical Socialists in that Upper-Austrian town, under the leadership of Richard Bernaschek, decided to offer resistance. When the news of the actual fighting in Linz arrived next morning in Vienna, the excitement of the workers reached such a pitch that the trade-union leaders could no longer keep them in control. One must keep in mind that six days previously, on February 6, blood had painted the Place de la Concorde red as a result of the clash between the Communists and the *Camelots du Roi* and the followers of the *Croix du Feu*, and that on the same day, February 12, a general strike had been proclaimed in Paris! The Paris events undoubtedly affected the mentality of the Vienna workers, and the more radical group demanded the proclamation of a general strike such as was on in Paris on the same day!

The Socialist leaders realized the fateful consequences of such a strike and tried to avoid it. Contact was sought with the Government, hoping that negotiations would be possible. When the bad

news arrived from Linz in the morning, the Lower-Austrian Vice-Governor Helmer, and his Socialist friend, Schneidmadl, went immediately to Josef Reither, and asked him to intervene. A quick conference was called in the Lower-Austrian Government building in the Herrengasse, at which, besides Reither, Hellmer, and Schneidmadl, the Government supporters Kollmann and Prader also participated. They begged Reither to intervene, and Reither, indeed, tried to reach the Chancellor on the telephone. This was at ten-thirty in the morning. Dollfuss said he had no time because he had to go to a Mass in honor of the Pope's anniversary of rule in the Saint Stephen's Cathedral; but if Reither would come to the church, he could speak with Dollfuss there at eleven-thirty. Kollmann and Prader went to President Wilhelm Miklas, who, however, said that, much as he would like to prevent the worst, he had no power.

A few minutes before noon, the many electric clocks at various thoroughfares of the city stopped. The electric tramways also stopped, and the lights went out in the offices. It was a dreary February morning, slightly misty and cold. The stoppage of the electricity and gas was the prearranged signal for the general strike; so at least the Government alleged. But in reality the executives of the party, who alone would have had the right to proclaim such a strike, could not meet: most of the important district leaders had been arrested earlier in the day. It was a wild strike of the more radical workers at the municipal electricity and gas works, and though individual radical workers started to spread the call for a general strike, none was actually proclaimed nor was the call of the individuals followed by the masses.

Nevertheless, the Government accepted the fiction that a general strike had been proclaimed; and in the early afternoon, posters appeared in which it was stated that the Social Democratic organized workers had downed tools at the electricity works. 'For this reason martial law is proclaimed in Vienna.' Later on in the afternoon police and *Heimwehr* appeared in the streets in large masses, and slowly army detachments also became evident in the city.

In the early afternoon a police car halted before the huge municipal Reumann Hof. Excited workers and their relatives were discussing in the courtyard and in the adjacent parks the events in Linz and in Vienna. The police, who suspected that the Reumann Hof was a centre of assembly for the *Schutzbund*, acted very provocatively.

The first shot fell here at this building in the early hours of the afternoon. Workers swear that the police fired first. The police allege that a shot was fired from a window at the police car.

'Away from the windows, otherwise we shoot!' shouted the policemen, and soon the battle was raging. The police brought machine guns into position and shot into the windows. The Socialists allege that this shooting was done without discrimination, whether Republican Guards or women or children were at the windows. After some hours' fighting, the police remained masters.

Similar assemblies of workers occurred in Meidling at the Indianer Hof, at the Philadelphia Bridge, at the Tivoli settlement, and near the Army Supply Corps barracks in Meidling.

Detachments of the Republican Guards thereupon occupied various buildings. Thus, in the Favoriten district, one of the largest working-class suburbs of Vienna, the Quellen Hof, the tramway garage, and the Workers' Club were occupied by Republican Guard detachments, while others occupied the top of the Laaerberg, a hill which dominates this district.

In Simmering some Republican Guards occupied the electricity and gas works, while other groups tried to defend the Simmering railway station and the district round the slaughter-house. In Ottakring the municipal tenement house-block at Sandleithen and the Workers' Club were defended by the *Schutzbund*. In the nineteenth district the long Karl Marx Hof was occupied by the workers.

By three o'clock the army had marched into the town, and the military had drawn a barbed-wire cordon round the inner city in which all Government buildings and the City Hall are situated.

Already in the early afternoon, I had gone out to investigate the situation with my friend and colleague, John Gunther, and his charming, clever, and somewhat too courageous wife. It was Frances Gunther's first experience of a civil war, and much as she was enraged by the fact that the Government had permitted the growth of the situation into a fight of brother against brother, she was also thrilled by the experience. We arrived near the Sandleithen building complex, a huge group of tenement houses in which about eight thousand people live. One part of the Sandleithen is on hilly ground, and in the allotment gardens not far from the tenement houses some Republican Guards had entrenched themselves. The police were in front of us, trying to take the barricades of the workers. We could

not see the fighting workers, but the bullets of the snipers whistled in the air high above our car. We were warned to stop, but Frances was so excited that she insisted, 'John, drive on!' The police then prevented us from carrying out this foolish idea.

After parking the car in a safe place, we went into hiding round the corner while the bullets occasionally whistled in the streets above us. Thence we drove to Simmering, where everything seemed to be quiet. We heard that the workers were still entrenched in the municipal electricity works, but we could not see any sign of action. 'At your own risk' the police permitted us to drive round the huge electric plant and later round the gas works: there was a hideous quiet. The machines were not working, and the huge works looked like the home of ghosts. One or two policemen at the corners were the only signs of life.

Some more fighting broke out later on, and when darkness covered Vienna suddenly, the city was filled with reports of machine guns and the whistling sound of rifle bullets. And then suddenly, 'Boom-Boom,' the sound of artillery shook the walls. The field guns had been brought into position before the huge Karl Marx Hof, the pride of the Vienna Socialists. Guns were also in action in the Simmering district, where the workers were fighting along the important eastern railway line which connects Vienna with Hungary and the Balkans. The railway line from Prague, again, was impassable because it runs next to the Karl Marx Hof and thus it was within the range of the guns.

When at night I was speaking on the telephone with London, I opened my window and the stenographer who took my message could hear the roar of the guns outside. All that night the sound of machine guns and the rifle fire never ceased in Vienna. The grey atmosphere of Monday was followed by a chilly, frosty morning, and the sun had hardly risen before the artillery was again firing.

When I arrived at the Karl Marx Hof the morning of the thirteenth, the cannon were still posted on the hill near the Doebbling railway station. Though the battle had lasted all night, the Government forces had not been able to recapture the police station which was adjacent to this block. The Karl Marx Hof was taken in the morning by storm, only after the night bombardment had battered three large holes in one of the arches of the right wing. The commander of the troops, a colonel, gave me the following information:

'We put the house under artillery fire, then we started with the machine guns, and afterward the troops stormed the house. Everybody was cleared out, and at present the house is being searched for arms and explosives.'

I asked the colonel what would be the fate of the five thousand people who had been dislodged from their homes, but he only shrugged his shoulders. The commander of the police, with his rifle on his shoulder, then intervened and said: 'Oh, after the house has been searched, the people, of course, will be able to return to their homes.'

But a little farther down the street, before a police station, I saw a group of about twenty arrested people who had been caught in the house — tired, nervous human wrecks, with eyes reddened from the all-night strain of watching the advancing troops. At the bottom of the street I reached the Karl Marx Hof. A crowd of curious people stood at the corner. The windows were all broken in this part of the building, and the walls were peppered by holes made by the machine guns.

When I tried to advance to inspect the house, the *Heimwehr* on guard shouted that anyone who advanced would be shot. A few minutes later they began to shoot. I tried to inspect the building from a hill above the building. From there one could see the holes made by the shells.

Some days later, my seven-year-old son Denis told me that a schoolmate of his lived in the Karl Marx Hof. 'Just imagine,' he related, 'poor Rudi had to lie all night just below the window, so that the bullets should not hit him. He told me he was weeping bitterly all night . . .'

I inspected also the Workers' Club in Ottakring, which withstood the attack for twenty-six hours. Many people lived in this club, and during the bombardment the wife of Albert Sever, a prominent member of the Social-Democratic Party, was killed by a shell splinter. When I arrived there, the streets were closed by barricades and the house was surrounded by police and military, but though the house was being bombarded by artillery, the Republican Guards were still shooting from the windows in the sixth floor. An hour later the house was taken, and only minor skirmishes took place later in the neighbourhood.

The fiercest fighting on the thirteenth, however, took place in

Floridsdorf, where comparative calm had ruled the day before. In a history of the Austrian working classes the events of February 13 will be known under the name of the battle of Floridsdorf — the last stand of the remnant of the proletarians before going down in face of Fascism. It was the accumulated bitterness of a class which realized that it was to lose everything — the finest social reforms in Europe — the splendid sunshine houses were fought for by the people that day.

Slowly defeated by the army and police in most of the other districts of Vienna, the proletariat offered its last resistance in Floridsdorf on the left bank of the Danube; only two bridges were open for traffic across the river, one thousand feet wide at this point, which made it difficult to rush up army and police reinforcements.

When I arrived at the Floridsdorf Danube Bridge, the sound of artillery and machine guns was still audible. The military halted our car at the riverside (I was again with John Gunther) and only after long persuasion did the officer permit me to 'proceed at your own risk; shooting is still going on.'

When next day I visited the battlefield of Floridsdorf once more, a white flag was flying on the huge municipal tenement building near the Floridsdorf Bridge. On the other side of the bridge the artillery was still trained against this huge tenement house, called F.A.C., the initials of the Social Democratic Floridsdorf Athletic Club. The officer pointed to the white flag on the tower. 'They have just surrendered,' he said. He pointed also to the big hole in the wall between the two towers where a large shell had crashed into the house. We were stopped again because in one of the side streets there was firing, but after that we were allowed to proceed to the Floridsdorf District Administration Building, which by then was the headquarters for the army and the police.

While we waited for the police official in charge, we had an opportunity to see how some of the prisoners were interrogated. A fifteen-year-old boy who had been arrested near the battleground apparently questioned the official character of his inquirer, for the detective promptly punched him in the face. It was only when the policeman who had accompanied us to this office whispered something into the ears of the interrogating officer that the tone of inquiry changed.

A woman came in crying: 'Herr Commissar, my husband left last night at seven o'clock and I have not heard of him yet.' Another woman came in shrieking: 'Where is my poor son, my only son?'



In the courtyard I saw the prisoners lined up — about a score of tramway men in uniform, apparently members of the Republican Guards. Another sixty or seventy men in civilian clothes, caught in a tenement building, were lined up in another corner. They were guarded by the police and by the Fascist *Heimwehr*. The inspector who received us stated that fifteen policemen had been killed in the previous day and night's fight of twenty-six hours in and near the Schlingerhof.

Despite the police prohibition against going into the 'battle area,' I managed to get to the Schlingerhof. The streets and the houses presented a picture of utmost desolation. Trolley and electric wires were hanging down, and the streets were full of broken glass and smeared with blood. The soldiers were just picking up parts of a barricade, made of full garbage tins, in front of the Schlingerhof.

Dead bodies were still lying in the streets. It was terrifying to see them, for most of those who lay dead amongst the broken glass of the Bruennerstrasse were unarmed people who had tried to get home and been shot in cold blood by mistake by nervous *Heimwehr* men. The Schlingerhof, which houses five hundred families, offered a pitiable sight. The front was dotted with machine-gun holes, and in the centre was a large hole made by a shell. An old man, haggard and sick-looking, was being carried out on a stretcher. He had been wounded badly at nine o'clock in the morning on the day when the fight began. For twenty-six hours he had been without medical attendance.

I entered the doorway of the house and saw that a long red streak on the floor marked the path by which the wounded had been moved. I went into the courtyard, accompanied by a policeman. Frightened women hurriedly closed the windows, because anybody standing at an open window was liable to be shot. 'Now you can open the windows again,' shouted the policeman, 'the fight is over.' The women looked relieved, and a dozen windows flew open.

Not far from the Schlingerhof in Floridsdorf is the northern railway station. The Republican Guards had been in possession of this place the day before, but a shell in the night had forced them to abandon it. The shell burst through the wall and exploded in the station refreshment room. The devastation was great: bricks, mortar, broken hardware and pottery were mixed with glass and blood. On a platform bench a man covered by torn pieces of wallpaper looked as if he were asleep: he was dead.

Opposite the station is the Floridsdorf Workers' Club. The fire brigade was trying to extinguish the fire which had broken out after a shell burst in the building. The house was reduced to almost smouldering ruins and the cinema attached to it was almost completely burned out.

The commander of the fire brigade which was extinguishing the fire at the club, however, was a prisoner. George Weissel, who on February 13 had tried to defend the headquarters of the Floridsdorf fire brigade, but surrendered later to the police, was hanged after being court-martialled. The leader of the fighting at the Reumann Hof, Karl Muenichreiter, as well as a number of other *Schutzbund* leaders from Vienna, Bruck-an-der Mur, Saint Poelten, and Graz shared the fate of Weissel.

The worst damaged building in Vienna, as result of the fighting next to the Ottakring Workers' Club, was the Goethe Hof in Floridsdorf. This huge tenement building was captured on the morning of February 15, but in fact the defenders had abandoned it the night before; it was peppered with shellholes. One shell exploded in the café, another in the schoolroom. In the schoolroom a row of pictures was still on the wall, and on the floor the children's copy-books were mixed up with débris and glass. The café offered an even more pitiable sight, and amongst the débris, pieces of furniture, and glass there was a large picture of Karl Marx, torn and trodden-on, lying on the floor.

On Wednesday and Thursday most of the Republican Guards gave up the fight, the *Schutzbuendler* on the Laaerberg having held out longest. The fighters in the Goethe Hof were also amongst the last to retire. Some of these Republican Guards offered resistance at the settlement houses in Kagran, and then retired, under cover of night, toward Czechoslovakia. Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch were fighting with the other guardists till Wednesday night and then they decided to retreat. Escaping under cover of the darkness on the highway to Petronel and then to Hainburg, they crossed the frontier of Austria and Czechoslovakia near Bratislava, and surrendered to the Czech frontier authorities.

The political consequences of the fight soon became obvious: the Social Democratic Party was outlawed; all Socialist organizations and associations were dissolved. The Fascist *Heimwehr*, of course, loudly claimed the lion's share in the victory and tried to press

Dollfuss toward far-reaching measures to convert Austria into a Fascist State.

Mayor Karl Seitz had been arrested on February 12. The defeat of the Socialists brought a Government Commissar into the City Hall in place of the elected Municipal Council. The Tyrol had submitted to authoritarian rule two days before the outbreak of civil war; Vorarlberg, Upper Austria, and Vienna quickly followed them to undisguised authoritarian rule. Soon all State and municipal councils were abolished, and everywhere appointed governors and officials took over power. Ender, the Minister for Constitutional Reform, was now asked to make a new Constitution in a truly authoritarian sense. It was, of course, a farce to call a constitution this new legislation, which was to narrow the liberties of the Austrians to almost nothing. But Austrians even in the past had been magnanimous in calling things a constitution; as the anecdote about Ferdinand *de Guetige*, the ruler during the 1848 Revolution demonstrates.

While the March Revolution in 1848 was on, the angry crowd succeeded in reaching the Imperial Palace. Metternich advised the Emperor to go onto the balcony and attempt to soothe the angry crowd. When he appeared on the balcony, the masses shouted: 'Down with the Emperor! You idiot! Give us a Constitution!'

Some weeks passed; and, after the Constitution was granted, another crowd assembled before the Palace. The Chancellor (no longer Metternich) advised the Emperor to go onto the balcony so that the masses might see him.

'No, I won't go,' said Ferdinand. 'I don't want to be insulted. I won't tolerate being called an idiot again.' But the Chancellor assured him that the crowd was well disposed this time. So Ferdinand went onto the balcony and the crowd duly cheered him.

He turned to the Chancellor. 'What happened to these men? Only some weeks ago they called me an idiot, and now they shout, "Long live our good Emperor!"'

'Oh,' said the Chancellor, 'since then Your Majesty most graciously granted a Constitution to the people.'

'Ah, so,' said the Emperor, with relief; then, turning to his Chancellor, he added: 'So they are nice to me because I gave them a Constitution? All right, give them another one then. . . .'

Such 'another one' was the Constitution of May, 1934. Nobody, however, has yet received any popular thanks for it.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE DOLLFUSS MURDER

THE civil war in February, 1934, was watched with much satisfaction by the National Socialists in Austria. While the determination of the Government in putting down a revolt from the Left with blood and iron embarrassed them, because it indicated that Dollfuss would show the same determination also in case of a Nazi *Putsch*, the fight against the Socialists filled the Nazis with satisfaction for several reasons. First, in the past the Nazis had had to fear that the Social Democrats might rally to the side of the Government in case of a Nazi *Putsch* and offer help. This no longer was to be feared. And, second, the Dollfuss Government did the 'dirty' job which a Nazi Government would have had to do in case it came to power, namely, the expurgation of Socialism. But now the blame would rest with the Dollfuss Government, and the Nazis could come as the 'pacifiers' of the working classes; so at least the National Socialists speculated.

Thus it was obvious that, if the Nazis wished to come to power by *Putsch* (democratic methods were no longer possible), then it was high time to strike; first, because it was known that Dollfuss contemplated making a new visit to Italy to draw Austria even nearer to Italy, and, second, before the hatred of the Socialists against the Austrian régime subsided, so that there must not be any fear of a 'stabbing in the back' from the Socialist side.

Now, as we have seen, the Nazis had made one attempt on Dollfuss' life, in October, 1933, and failed. Though Drtil, the actual assailant, received some punishment, no effort was made to establish what forces had been behind him. As we know, the conspiracy had originated in Styria. As far back as 1932, the Styrian *Heimwehr* had concluded a peace with the Nazis and recognized Hitler as their leader. When Dollfuss started his fight against National Socialism, he encountered almost insurmountable difficulties in Styria. It was

the only province where Nazi officials could exist unmolested, and where the gendarmerie, following the example of its chief, the Provincial Governor, Anton Rintelen, was under Nazi influence. Mussolini is said to have realized the danger and warned Dollfuss against Rintelen, at Riccione in August, 1933, saying, 'Send him to me; I will take care of him.' Accordingly, some months after the Drtil attempt, Rintelen became Austrian Minister to Rome.

This Rintelen was for over two years the great hope of the Nazis, who believed him to be cast for the rôle which von Papen had played in Germany in 1933.

The Rintelen family comes from Westphalia, in Germany. Rintelen was born in Graz, the son of a professor in the Graz University. He became Professor of Civil Law in Graz; in 1918 he was elected a member of the Styrian Diet; and in the following year he became Provincial Governor of Styria. In this capacity, he acquired great influence in all spheres of Styrian public life. He was made Minister of Education in 1926; but when two years later Seipel again became Chancellor, he returned to his old post as Provincial Governor of Styria. Unscrupulous, energetic, and clever, Rintelen seems to have aimed at the chancellorship. At one time he had hoped to attain this aim through a coalition between the Christian Socials, his own party, and the Social Democrats. But the Social Democrats distrusted this clever intriguer. When he saw that his ambitions could not be realized through the Social Democrats, he about-faced and allied himself with the National Socialists.

When Mussolini and Hitler had their meeting in Stra, near Venice, in June, 1934, both Rintelen and the Austrian Nazis, as well as their masters in Munich, were frightened. They knew that Hitler would have to promise Mussolini to stop the Nazi terror in Austria, or at least to cut off financial and material help from Germany. Hitler promised, and in face of this pledge the prospects of Rintelen and Habicht began to look black. Hitler, however, did not restrain his secondary chiefs and the terror continued.

At the end of June, 1934, it was rumoured that Rintelen was to become Chancellor of Austria. The Italian papers observed the pledge of secrecy agreed on between the two Premiers in Stra and were silent regarding the Venice agreement, but the *Voelkischer Beobachter* stated that Rintelen was to become Chancellor, and the statement was made with an air of mystery as if this would be the natural consequence of the Venice talks.

It became apparent that the Munich centre of the Austrian Nazis was preparing for a last, decisive *coup*. There was an increase of gun-running into Styria, and explosives were sent into Vorarlberg and the Tyrol, as well as Salzburg. On July 7 the leader of the Austrian Nazi exiles, Frauenfeld, broadcast a speech from Munich which was an open invitation to revolution. The weekly organ of the Tyrol exiles, *Der rote Adler*, declared that the present tactics — terror with bombs — could not force a tyrannical Government, like the Dollfuss Cabinet, to submit. 'With wishy-washy methods we cannot attain anything,' said the article; and it invited the Tyrol people to revolt. This paper was printed in Munich and smuggled into the Tyrol in tens of thousands.

About July 20, the Nazis became very active. Rintelen left Rome and went first to Graz and then to Vienna. By that time Berlin even made hints that a decisive stroke was to be delivered in Vienna. On July 24, the official German agency, the Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau, sent out a message which foreshadowed a Communist rising in Vienna. Apparently, the Germans intended to arrange the *Putsch* so as to create the impression that the new Nazi Government rose to power by exterminating a Communist *Putsch*. It is interesting that the recent edition of a German encyclopaedia described the murder of Dollfuss as having been effected by 'Marxists.'

Moreover, early in the morning of July 25, the Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau issued instructions to all newspapers in Germany that 'all reports of today's events in Austria must be published in the form communicated to them by the Deutsches Nachrichten Bureau.' Half an hour after the arrival of the 'putschists' in the Chancellery in Vienna, that Bureau sent out a message from Vienna in which the victory of the revolution was heralded in glowing terms and the Chancellor's death was announced.

The events of that fatal July 25 are too well known to bear repetition; they can be recapitulated briefly here.

Around eleven o'clock in the morning, one hundred forty-four Nazis, disguised in the uniforms of the *Deutschmeister*, the crack Vienna regiment, assembled in the gymnasium of the *Deutscher Turnerbund*. A detective, named Marek, warned Fey of these preparations; Fey notified Dollfuss, who was holding a Cabinet Council in the Ballhausplatz. In view of all the warnings, Dollfuss broke off the Council at twelve-fifty and told all the Ministers, with

the exception of Fey and his assistant Karwinsky, to go to their own offices in other buildings.

Scarcely were they out of the Chancellery, when the Nazis arrived, driving up in three huge motor-lorries. Strangely enough, there had been no attempt to increase the usual guard in the Ballhausplatz, which consisted of two men in front of the palace and a guard of honour of a dozen men inside.

No one in the Chancellery remembered the exact time, but the Dutch Minister who was leaving the Ballhausplatz had just observed that his watch marked two minutes past one when he saw the three lorries drive up. The three huge oak doors were closed behind them.

Soon after, I drove with a friend through the square; everything looked dead; the blinds were drawn, and still there were neither police nor other members of the State forces on the square. It was another twenty minutes before I saw an armoured police car take up position between the Imperial Palace and the Chancellery; this was followed by eight detectives who stood on one corner, and shortly afterward by four policemen, armed with rifles, who took up their posts between the cellar windows of the front part of the Chancellery.

Meantime, inside the beautiful baroque building things were happening quickly. Some of the rebels, led by the ex-sergeant Otto Planetta, rushed up the main staircase, bent on assassinating Dollfuss. They found him in the yellow drawing-room leading into the great hall used for the two Congresses of Vienna.

This room had five doors, arranged by Metternich so that the five monarchs participating at the Congress of 1815 might enter simultaneously. But what was practical in 1815 to solve the question of precedence proved disastrous in 1934 when the doors gave five-fold chances to the entering rebels. They shot Dollfuss down and left him to die, under the care of his faithful attendant, Hedwicek.

The other terrorists, meanwhile, spread throughout the building. The staffs of the Chancellor's office and of the Federal President's office (which is in the same building) were arrested at the point of a revolver and herded into one of the smaller courtyards. Eighteen of the highest officials, amongst them Fey and Karwinsky, were placed under heavy guard in the Cabinet Council room, where they were made to stand for five hours with their hands up, under threat of instant death to anyone who lowered his arms. Of Fey, who was later taken out, we shall hear more.

The unfortunate officials had not the least idea of what had happened. I know from the narratives of some of them that at first they believed that the army was searching for some intruder or for hidden explosives. Later it was whispered from one to another that their guards were National Socialists disguised as soldiers. Though they heard shots fired on the first floor, they had no idea until their release that the Chancellor had been murdered.

The rebels forced the telephone girl to make two connections; the first was with the German Legation! The second was made with the Café Eiles, where the supreme leader of the *coup*, known only as 'Herr Kunze,' was supposed to be waiting. This 'Herr Kunze' was probably identical with the lawyer Gustav Waechter, who, however, apparently had lost heart and fled. Next day he made good his escape to Germany.

It is characteristic of Vienna that a café must always play a rôle in any important political development! Instead of waiting in his office, this lawyer was to give his orders from a remote café of the eighth district! Undoubtedly the key to the situation was in the hands of this Herr Gustav Waechter. He was to await the signal of the conspirators that they had succeeded in occupying the building and murdering Dollfuss; then he was to call Rintelen on the telephone and order him to the Chancellery. But the lawyer, during the anxious minutes of waiting, lost heart; Rintelen waited in vain for his call, while the rebels could not find the man from whom they expected further orders.

Now at the same time that the rebels had entered the Chancellery, fourteen men stormed the office of the Ravag, the Austrian broadcasting company, and at revolver point forced the announcer to declare that the Dollfuss Government had resigned and that Rintelen had been appointed Chancellor. The conspirators cut the telephone wires, but not before the telephone girl had sent out an SOS to the police. Shortly after, the first police car arrived, to be received by the rebels with wild rifle-fire. After three hours of fighting with machine guns and hand grenades, they were forced to surrender.

Since the station was wrecked during all this fighting, the big Bamberg Station was connected with Linz through a telephone line; and during the rest of that afternoon, while the fate of Austria was being played out, Linz supplied Vienna with waltz tunes.



Back at the Ballhausplatz, nothing seemed to be happening and those who watched had no inkling of what was going on behind the closed doors. About two o'clock, Herr Friedrich Funder, editor of the Government newspaper, *Reichspost*, had come to survey the situation. A young German photographer, who had arrived the night before from Berlin, told him:

'Rintelen is Chancellor. The Austrian Legion are already on their way, and the new police chief is flying here from Berlin.'

Funder realized that it was time to act, and went to Rintelen's hotel to find him. I myself had seen Rintelen a few hours before. While I was sitting on the terrace of the Café Imperial about eleven o'clock, one of my friends who knew Rintelen well saw him walking somewhat nervously up and down, and went over to talk with him. When my friend returned, he said to me: 'Rintelen told me that the situation is unchanged; Mussolini places unlimited trust in Dollfuss. He has come to Vienna only to see a few friends, and is off tomorrow morning to Aussee in Styria for his summer holiday.'

Funder found Rintelen, and under some pretext persuaded him to go to the War Office, where he was placed under guard. So that, while the Nazis inside the Chancellery were still believing that the *Putsch* had succeeded and that Rintelen was Chancellor, he had been arrested.

Sitting in the War Office also, there was a new Provincial Government. President Miklas, hearing the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor were captives, knew himself to be in sole charge of the Government. He at once telephoned those Cabinet Ministers who were not in the hands of the rebels, and with firm determination declared that he refused to recognize any decisions that the prisoners of the *Putsch* might make or to accept any political conditions which the conspirators might pose. And he appointed Schuschnigg Chancellor during the interim, with full power to restore law and order, to punish the rebels, and to rescue the captured members of the Government. The procedure he left to Schuschnigg.

All this time, the blinds of the Chancellor's office were drawn, except for two windows where the rebels were standing with revolvers in their hands, and where barricades were apparently being put up in the event the windows had to be defended. The *Heimwehr* arrived at two-fifteen and took up position, directing two machine guns on the building. Unaware that Dollfuss was dying, they feared that if they stormed the building the rebels would shoot him.

At three o'clock, Baron von Baarenfels, then Lower-Austrian *Heimwehr* leader and Vice-Governor, came, and informed the police that the Provisional Government was sitting in the War Office, and that all orders were coming from there. The police at three-forty-five prepared to storm the building. But shortly before four, Fey and Holzweber, the leader of the rebels, appeared on the balcony of the first floor. A murmur went through the crowd of perhaps fifty people who were standing in the square.

I had come back about four o'clock, and the manner of my coming back is typical of Vienna. After three o'clock a police cordon surrounded the district near the Chancellery and it was impossible to get through even with press cards. But the number 9 bus line was still running through the cordon! I went back, boarded a bus, and jumped off when again inside the cordon.

The postal lorries were also permitted to pass through the police cordon. There was a post office in the Imperial Palace, right opposite the entrance of the Chancellery. At five o'clock, just when important negotiations were being conducted on the balcony, a postal lorry came to fetch the afternoon's post, and the police pickets permitted it to enter the building. Business as usual, even if there is a revolution!

Fey, on the balcony, spoke to the staff commander of the police, Hofrat Doctor Humpel, and ordered him and Police Inspector Eibel to come in, but unarmed. The officers returned shortly; perspiring and excited, Eibel went to the telephone in the Imperial Palace and made a call which the journalists who stood around could hear. He informed his superiors that Dollfuss was badly wounded and had resigned, and that his place was to be taken by someone else. He said that the persons inside were acting under military discipline and giving regular salutes. Afterward, Eibel asked the sentry at the back door of the Chancellery if Dollfuss needed a doctor. The man replied that the Chancellor was dead.

After five o'clock, Odo von Neustaedter-Stuermer, the Minister of Labour, and the Under-Secretary of War, General Zehner, arrived, bringing the ultimatum of the Schuschnigg Cabinet Council to the rebels. Fey came out on the balcony again at five-fifteen and shouted, 'Where is Rintelen?'

'Rintelen is not coming!' shouted back Neustaedter-Stuermer. Fey looked astonished.

Neustaedter-Stuermer went on: 'At five-forty-five the building will be stormed. In the name of the Government, I promise a safe-conduct to the rebels. They will be conducted, if they wish, to the German frontier. But if you do not surrender, we shall storm the building in twenty minutes' time.'

Fey replied: 'No. You will not storm the building. I am the Secretary for Public Security, and I order that no such move be made.'

Neustaedter-Stuermer answered calmly: 'You are mistaken, Herr Fey. The Federal President has ordered that Doctor Schuschnigg take over the Government; the members of the Government who are in the hands of the rebels are not competent to make any valid agreement or to issue orders.'

Forty minutes of tension followed. Expecting the building to be stormed at any minute, everyone in the square sought cover. Fey appeared once more, and said that the occupants of the building were prepared to accept the offer of a safe-conduct, provided they could have military protection. Neustaedter-Stuermer promised. Fey asked for a further fifteen minutes' grace. Somebody shouted from below: 'But nothing must happen to those who are in the building.'

The fifteen minutes passed and a second fifteen minutes. General Zehner now took over the command of the military operations.

At seven o'clock the German Minister, Herr Rieth, arrived, and went in. Fey was released at seven-thirty, and was cheered by the *Heimwehr*. Neustaedter-Stuermer instantly asked him if it was true that the Chancellor was dead.

Fey answered in a low voice: 'Yes, he is dead. I spoke to him just before the end, and he begged me to take care of his family. His last words were, "Rintelen must make peace."'

There was a big crowd around them, and so Fey, Neustaedter-Stuermer, and General Zehner went into the courtyard of the Imperial Palace. Three companies of soldiers arrived, and later on twenty motor-lorries with soldiers; also an armoured car.

When the rebels saw that everything was lost, many of them went down to the cellars and tried to find overalls in the printing works of the Chancellor's office so as to escape in the disguise of workmen. Others tried to induce the women to give them their dresses.

By seven-forty-five it was dark and the lamps in the main entrance of the Chancellery had been lit. Ten minutes later the big door was



#### THE AUSTRIAN CHANCELLERY

Where, on July 25, 1934, the Putschists murdered Chancellor Dollfuss, surrendered, and negotiated with the provisional Schuschnigg Government.

opened to let in the first group of police: they rounded up the rebels and arrested them. At eight-ten the first ten civilians who had been kept in custody by the rebels came out; then larger groups followed. The military lorries were placed in front of the Burg-Theater and the rebels were escorted there in small groups.

Thus by nightfall the *Putsch* had failed in Vienna. And, after two days' fighting in Carinthia and Styria, order was restored throughout the country. The help that the Nazis must have expected from Germany never came, and Mussolini mobilized his troops along the Brenner, to make quite sure that it would not.

In spite of the safe-conduct, thirteen of the rebels were hanged, including Holzweber and Planetta. Rintelen went on trial and was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of high treason. But he was shortly removed to a sanatorium under police surveillance.

The *Putsch* of July 25 failed, partly because two lawyers, Rintelen and Waechter, lost heart and failed to play the parts which had been assigned to them by the wire-pullers in Munich. But the man who really mastered the situation was the Federal President, Herr Wilhelm Miklas. A middle-sized, thick-set man with broad shoulders, with squinting eyes, he does not give the impression either of an important statesman or of an energetic person. He comes from a family of teachers, and was a teacher himself. A fanatic Roman Catholic, he was elected to Parliament when still a young man on a Christian Social platform, and because of his impartial and honest mentality was soon elected Speaker of the Austrian House of Commons. From this post Chancellor Seipel helped him into the position of the President of the Republic in December, 1928. His weakness in February, 1934, undoubtedly was only too evident — had he possessed more courage, he could have averted, or at least checked in time the carnage. Learning probably a lesson from those fatal days, Miklas behaved with dignity in July.

Only the vigilance of the police had prevented Miklas from becoming the victim of the Nazi *Putsch*. The day before Dollfuss was killed, a motor-car was held up by the Klagenfurt police, because confidential information had been received that the occupants were proceeding to Velden, where President Miklas was spending the summer holidays, to make an attempt on his life. One of the occupants of the car had come on July 21 from Berlin.

## CHAPTER XXV

### TRAFFIC IN KINGS

ACCORDING to a pre-war Austrian joke, the major rulers of Europe were once summoned before the throne of God and questioned about their respective wishes.

'I want to rule the entire Continent,' Kaiser Wilhelm II said with a proud gesture.

'I want to rule over the whole of Asia,' said Tsar Nicholas II.

'I want domination over the seven seas,' said the King of England.

Then God turned benevolently toward Francis Joseph I, who had stood modestly and patiently in the corner.

And the veteran ruler answered: 'I don't want anything. I just came along with the others.'

With the exception of the English, where are those mighty dynasties? And yet, if their successors, the Stalins and Hitlers, should be summoned to the same supreme forum, would their answers sound differently? In the years 1917 and 1918 three powerful and ancient dynasties lost their thrones: the Romanoffs in Russia, the Hohenzollerns in Germany, and the Habsburgs in Austria. The Sultan of Turkey met the same fate only a few years later, while George II of Greece was driven into exile in 1923. The list of departing monarchs was closed by the resignation of King Alfonso XIII of Spain in April, 1931. The resignation of King Edward VIII does not come under the category because his renunciation of his rights to the throne did not affect the continuity of the monarchist principle in his country.

The king by hereditary right has given way to another figure — the dictator, risen from the lower ranks of the population. But since the war two events have run counter to this anti-monarchist wave: the new Republic of Albania, established in 1925, changed to a Monarchy in September, 1928, when its President became King

under the name of Zog I, while Republican Greece restored King George II to his throne. There are strong Monarchist movements observable in Austria and Hungary.

The change from a Republic to a Monarchy in Albania was a simple affair. Albania, as an independent country, came into existence only in 1913; and during the war it was occupied by foreign troops. After the war a regency of four members exercised the executive authority. This regency Achmed Zogu, after his successful *coup*, converted into a Republic, and manoeuvred himself into the position of a Republican President. This Republic, in turn, had exactly three years' life; on September 1, 1928, the third meeting of the Constituent Assembly began a revision of the Constitution; the majority manifesting a desire of the Albanian people for the establishment of a Monarchy and the elevation to the throne of Skanderbeg Achmed Zogu, alleged saviour of the nation. (Whether the people really desired such a course is highly doubtful; but who would have dared to act otherwise than as these deputies of the Constituent Assembly acted, unless they wanted to hang on the trees along the Durazzo road to Tirana?)

A commission to report on the constitutional reform establishing the Monarchy was created on the same day. The fact that Achmed Zogu took the title, 'Zog I, King of the Albanians,' disquieted Yugoslavia and Greece more than the mere fact of the conversion of the Albanian Republic into a Monarchy. Yugoslavia's disquietude was based on the fact that more than half a million Albanians had been living in Yugoslavia since the Peace Treaties turned over to the jurisdiction of Belgrade the tract of territory they inhabit. The title 'King of the Albanians' was calculated, therefore, to become the rallying cry of the irredentist Albanians. Greece also regarded the Albanian Monarchy in the same light, since in Greece also there are two hundred fifty thousand Albanians who would like to unite with the Fatherland. Nevertheless, the Greek Government, in those days strongly Republican, sent congratulations to Zog.

Seven years after Zog's ascent to the throne of Albania, King George II of Greece returned to the throne from which he had been driven away in 1923. 'I am the King of the Hellenes.' With these words King George II of Greece answered the 'Who goes there?' challenge of the sentries ranged before Hadrian's Arch — the symbolic gate of Athens, just as Temple Bar is for the City of London.

And after answering the challenge, he entered his capital on November 25, 1935, after more than a decade in exile, spent mostly in Bucharest and London.

The manifesto which was issued by King George II after his arrival in Athens created a favourable impression, especially the sentences, 'I consign the past to oblivion,' and 'I am resolved to assure equality and justice for all.'

King George naturally was greatly astonished by the changes in his capital since he had left the country. When he left Greece, Athens was a comparatively small city of just over two hundred thousand inhabitants. When he returned, the city, together with the Piraeus, counted almost one million inhabitants. At the Boulevard Syngros a thirty-six-foot column had been erected in the King's honour, while a little farther along, in the shadow of the mighty pillars of the Temple of Jupiter Olympus, a large triumphal arch had been built.

The people who believed that the return to the old monarchical system would bring back peace and tranquillity in Greece were gravely disappointed by the actions of the King. In the beginning of his rule King George II showed an increasing desire to return to parliamentary methods; and he was supported almost unanimously by the population. But when General Metaxas was appointed Premier, this move of the King alienated many of his supporters. The former Republicans regarded Metaxas, the man who had attempted a Royalist *Putsch* in 1922, with suspicion; the Royalists who helped the restoration movement found themselves cheated by not being asked to take over the rule. Metaxas first tried to eliminate Parliament by establishing a committee of thirty members from all parties to control the Government activities, but on August 4, 1936, he used the excuse of a threatened general strike to establish a dictatorship in Greece.

The dictatorship created a situation full of dangers for Greece because the temperamental Greeks are accustomed to direct their own destinies and refuse to accept dictatorships. The dictatorial régime of General Pangalos lasted just over a year, and that of Kondylis only a few weeks. The proclamation of the dictatorship was the more regrettable because of the King's popularity during the first eight months of his rule, when he was regarded as an umpire above the parties. It is now feared that his name will be



compromised as was that of King Alexander of Yugoslavia when he attempted to solve the problems of his country by establishing a royal dictatorship, also assisted by a trusted general.

The spectre of a Habsburg restoration in Hungary or in Austria has repeatedly caused mighty scares in the various Chancelleries of Europe. In a previous chapter the attempt of the late Emperor Karl to regain his throne in Hungary in the spring and in the autumn of 1921 has been described. But in Austria the Monarchist restoration question gained actuality only after the defeat of the Socialists in the civil war of February, 1934. Until then the Social Democrats were so strong, and their republicanism was so firm and convinced, that an attempt at restoration did not come into the realm of practical politics. Only a few aristocrats and a small group of former officers and bourgeois people remained faithful to the Emperor — a group which was regarded as utterly without influence in Republican Austria.

The first large-scale Monarchist demonstration I witnessed on the occasion of the death of Emperor Karl in Madeira on April 1, 1922. Bismarck, the man who united the Germans in the Second Empire, was born on April Fool's Day; Karl, under whose rule the ancient Habsburg Monarchy went to pieces, died on the same day.

The death of Emperor Karl, who was a thoroughly honest, well-meaning, though somewhat weak person, certainly stirred the Monarchist feeling of many. Some days later, when a memorial Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral, the cream of the former courtly society once more assembled under the serene vaults of Saint Stephen's. In those days I was living in the *reality* of a new Austria, in the atmosphere of the Republic, and here, under the mighty Gothic pillars and arches of the Cathedral, there was another Vienna — the Vienna of the past. It was as if thousands of graves had been opened; the generals in their old, somewhat badly fitting Imperial uniforms, captains of the dragoons, lieutenants of the Uhlans in splendid multi-coloured, almost operetta-like uniforms, looked strange and anachronistic.

After the service the more determined and courageous participants in the memorial Mass marched to Parliament, and there demanded that black flags should be hoisted on the flagstaffs before the House of Parliament. But the Republican Assembly refused to pay this

last homage to the dead Emperor, which was natural from the point of view of the Republic, but somewhat mean and childish from a more general human point of view. The crowd became louder and louder, but the members inside remained unyielding. So menacing became the attitude of the few hundred demonstrators that the police with drawn sabres were put into action; and when this did not succeed, mounted police cleared the streets.

Those April, 1922, demonstrations, however, were but a fleeting episode in the history of the post-war monarchism. After it the Legitimist movement became almost the private club affair of a few score officers of the former Imperial army and a few dozen aristocrats, among them Count Adalbert Sternberg, of whose eccentricities we have heard in another chapter. It required no special heroism to be a Monarchist in those days because the Republicans were very tolerant and, though they disliked the Monarchist propaganda, they hated to suppress it. But Count Adalbert was not an Austrian subject: he had become a Czechoslovak citizen after the war. So eventually the first expulsion order was issued against him: but in easy-going Austria an expulsion order is not always as serious as it looks. In the Count's case it meant that he transferred his headquarters from the bar of the Hotel Sacher to the bar of the Grand Hotel. He gave as an excuse that he could no longer drink in a bar frequented by Count Herberstein, a gentleman who once refused to fight a duel with him.

In the Grand Hotel bar Don Quixote found his Sancho Panza in the person of Altgraf Hermann Salm. From this bar the aristocrats began a campaign for their lost cause. But finally Republican Austria became really indignant, and the expulsion order against Count Sternberg was enforced.

Sancho Panza carried on in behalf of the knight errant. At a Monarchist meeting twelve years ago he addressed a prayer to the dead Emperor Karl: 'O Holy Martyr-Emperor, thou chosen son of the King of Kings, pray for us that He should enlighten the children of Austria, misguided by lies and calumnies, and collect the erring sheep. Only one shepherd and one herd should exist in thy kingdom.'

Neither Count Sternberg nor Altgraf Salm is now amongst the living. They passed on after supplying a chapter to Legitimist history which certainly did not do much to hasten the restoration,

but which, at least, did make life more interesting and romantic in the two blocks of houses around the Hotel Sacher.

But while Count Sternberg, Altgraf Salm, Prince Johannes Liechtenstein, and some other aristocratic names basked in the spot-light as the representatives of an exclusive group of aristocrats who were still yearning for the return of times which cannot return any more, a silent man was working really hard in an office of the remote Baeckerstrasse in Vienna to fill the Monarchist movement with new life and to bring about a solid organization of all Legitimist friends within a Royalist movement. This man was Baron Friedrich von Wiesner.

Baron von Wiesner is a small, thick-set man, with an energetic face, prominent chin and a strongly bent nose. He wears a small moustache; and over the keen dark eyes he places occasionally a pince-nez, which, if not worn on the nose, is often held in the gesticulating right hand. This movement of Baron von Wiesner immediately reveals the lawyer. He was born in October, 1871, son of Professor Julius von Wiesner, probably one of the greatest botanists and physiologists of his time. Though Professor Wiesner was of Jewish origin, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, one of the fathers of the present ideology in the Third German Reich, dedicated to him his *chef-d'oeuvre*, *Die Grundlagen des XIX. Jahrhundert*.

After the completion of his studies at the Vienna University, Wiesner was appointed Public Prosecutor, and was made *Kronjurist* (a title corresponding to the British K.C.) in 1911. In this quality he was entrusted with the investigation of the murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo. He was a man who always told the truth even if the opposite would be more helpful to his country. His famous telegram of July 13, 1914, in which he summed up the results of his investigations and in which he stated that 'a direct complicity of the Serbian Government could not be established,' displeased many of his friends.

After the completion of the inquiry, Baron von Wiesner was sent as representative of the Austrian Foreign Office to the Austrian Army Headquarters. In February, 1917, he was appointed head of the Press Office of the Austrian Foreign Ministry; and this brought him the rank of a Minister and the title of Excellency. In this position he remained until the collapse of the Dual Monarchy.

As early as November, 1918, Baron von Wiesner started a Legiti-

mist movement in Austria. He collected a handful of friends who he knew had remained faithful to the idea of the Imperial State and to the dynasty. At the constitutive meeting he said:

'We are in the midst of a Revolution. The Monarchy can be temporarily eliminated in Austria; this disappearance, however, is only a revolutionary apparition. Austria, I am convinced, will recall her ruler after she has had painful experiences with various shibboleths. At the end of these various experiments, Austria will realize that she cannot be the creature of unbounded political forces in the very heart of Europe, where she is exposed to the various ambitions of others, these ambitions being of a foreign political nature. Against these influences she can protect herself only through unity, and by the continuity of the Monarchy.'

Daring, almost visionary words for such tormented days. And yet at the time when Baron von Wiesner founded his movement all such efforts appeared more like a farce. The army, beaten and dissolved, was rapidly disintegrating; the aristocracy had collapsed both morally and materially; the former Imperial officials, once the great supporters of the Habsburgs, were now divided into various political camps. The real Monarchists could be counted on the fingers of one hand. But Baron Wiesner refused to despair. 'The Monarchists must be somewhere; they are only hiding,' he used to repeat. This faith, despite persecution and jeers, enabled him to persevere. Before 1927, the opposition to the Monarchy was a matter both of domestic and foreign politics. The Little Entente from the beginning, of course, always opposed restoration in Austria as well as in Hungary; and for some time, in the Treaty of Rapallo, Italy participated in this open opposition. At home, the strongest party, the Social Democrats, were naturally opponents of the Monarchy, as were the Pan-Germans; and even the Christian Social Party was not solidly in favour of it.

The situation changed in 1927, with the beginning of the growth of the *Heimwehr*. From that time on many people of the lower and upper middle classes began to view the Legitimist ideas as the only right solution for Austria. When the National-Socialist movement started its rise in Austria, owing to the support received from Hitler's Germany, then the Monarchist movement began to progress as a counterpoise to the Pan-German aims of the Nazi campaign.

Baron Wiesner's effort in these days was to prove that while the

different 'isms' strive to capture the population, the Monarchy must claim to have the only platform which endeavours to establish a higher order of justice, to bring back tradition and to assure continuity in political life. The Monarchy must attempt to draw the entire people toward the job of participating in the Government, and in this it differs from the other different authoritarian régimes. For this reason, argues Baron von Wiesner, the coming Austrian Monarchy will be a social Monarchy, which in its essence will be democratic.

The situation changed, however, when Dollfuss came to power, and Parliament was abolished. The change became more observable when in February, 1934, the Socialists, the staunchest supporters of the Republic, were defeated and their party dissolved. Since this time the dictatorial régime in Austria has reduced the open opposition to a restoration to almost nothing. The destruction of the Social-Democratic Party and the proscription of the National-Socialist Party in Austria removed the two most formidable forces opposing restoration. The Dollfuss Cabinet was not only Monarchist in feeling, but many of its members were active Legitimists; this has been even more true in the case of Schuschnigg's governments. Chancellor von Schuschnigg has always been known for his outspoken Monarchist sentiments; his armed organization, the *Ostmaerkische Sturmscharen*, used to be one hundred per cent Monarchist.

The chief organization of the Legitimists is the so-called *Reichsbund der Oesterreicher*. This includes all the other Legitimist organizations, amongst which the most important is the *Eiserner Ring*. Next to Baron von Wiesner, Prince Max von Hohenberg, the elder son of the late Archduke Francis Ferdinand, plays an important rôle in the leadership, as well as General Dankl; and recently the name of Baron Ferdinand Mirbach has become more prominent.

There is scarcely any legal obstacle to an Austrian restoration. The Treaty of Saint-Germain contains no special provision depriving the Habsburgs of access to the Austrian throne. The Constitution of the old days describes Austria as a democratic Republic, but the Constitution of May 1, 1934, already described the country as the 'Federal State of Austria.' The expulsion of the Habsburgs from Austria was not incorporated even into the old Republican Constitution, but was effected under a *Verfassungs-Gesetz* (constitutional

law), passed by a two-thirds majority on April 3, 1919. These laws were repealed in effect in July, 1935.

The repeal of these Habsburg laws showed that the foreign political opposition was still formidable. The Little Entente immediately protested in violent newspaper articles, and a Little Entente meeting once more emphasized the decided opposition of the three countries to any such definite measure as a restoration in Austria.

Germany fell into a veritable state of hysteria when the news of the restoration of the Habsburg properties reached Berlin and Munich. A Habsburg restoration in Austria would be almost a fatal blow to Nazi aspirations in Austrian lands. Moreover, it is feared in Berlin that the restoration of the Monarchy in Vienna would have a strong repercussion in Catholic Bavaria and the other South-German States.

While the Legitimist movement in Austria was increasing by leaps and bounds, and when Baron von Wiesner was delivering lectures in London about restoration, nervousness in Berlin reached such a stage that the German Foreign Minister, Baron von Neurath, was sent to Vienna to warn the Austrian Chancellor that Germany would under no circumstances tolerate a restoration in Vienna.

At this juncture Austria made the great mistake of counting too much on Italian support in the matter of a restoration. It seems that Mussolini must have given certain undertakings which the Austrians accepted too literally. He certainly agreed with Schuschnigg that the restoration was an internal affair of Austria's, but, no doubt, he assumed that Schuschnigg would, in any case, realize that the time was not yet. Moreover, the Duce made in February certain utterances to Prince Xavier of Parma, the brother of Empress Zita, which made the Legitimists believe that the Italian Premier was not opposed to restoration.

When, however, the Germans got extremely scared about the menace of restoration in February, 1937, Signor Mussolini put his writers into action, and the Rome and Milan papers declared that the Habsburg restoration would not only be inopportune, but would constitute a danger to peace. This was done without a word of warning to Vienna. A deep wave of depression swept not only the Legitimist camp but also Government quarters. As if to add insult to injury, one of the leading papers of Fascismo called Emperor Otto a *signoretto* (a young gentleman) — and Signor Virgilio Gayda

wrote in the *Giornale d'Italia* that a 'restoration in Austria can bring nothing but dangers.' Also he wrote that Italy cannot assume the whole burden of the defence of the Brenner, because she has now to defend other interests in her Imperium.

This caused quite a panic in Vienna, and the Austrians were compelled to revise their entire political platform. During the previous eighteen months (up to February, 1937) the Legitimist organization, which had been assimilated within the Fatherland Front, had become the only really activist group within this Austrian political monopoly.

But by April 14, 1937, Chancellor Schuschnigg, in a speech made before the local leaders of the Fatherland Front in Eisenstadt, the capital of the State of Burgenland, declared that it is not the state form of Austria that matters, but the existence of the State. And whereas hitherto the Legitimists, and with them a large part of the Government grouping, had maintained that the alternatives for Austria were the *Anschluss* or Restoration, in the same speech Schuschnigg declared that it was wrong to believe that there were only these two possibilities. With this the Monarchist question received a very considerable setback. Italy had pulled the chestnuts from the fire for Germany; and Austria could only make a wry face about it.

In Hungary the Legitimist movement suffered a serious setback after the rise to power of General Goemboes. In 1921, as we have seen, Goemboes twice resisted attempts to restore the Habsburgs in Hungary, and he had not changed his attitude since. Later, he talked of the necessity of a national Magyar king, and in answer to queries from Legitimist quarters he explained that by a national king he meant a ruler who was King of Hungary alone. This automatically excluded 'King' Otto, who was also claimant of the throne of Austria as 'Emperor' Otto.

'Who, then, is Goemboes's candidate?' asked the puzzled Legitimists. When he was in opposition and standing on the platform of a 'free election of a King,' Goemboes's candidate for the Hungarian throne was Archduke Albrecht, the only son of the late Archduke Frederick of Habsburg. Though Albrecht is a member of the hated Habsburg family, Goemboes appeared to make an exception in his case because Albrecht also claimed to have the blood

of the last Magyar national kings in his veins, through his mother, the late Princess Isabella of Croy-Duelmen. (The last Magyar national kings, the Arpad dynasty, died out in the thirteenth century.)

Albrecht, however, a few years ago married Frau Ludwig von Rudnay, the divorced wife of a Hungarian diplomat; and this marriage with a commoner and with a Protestant appeared to kill his chances as a candidate for the Hungarian throne. It is true that Albrecht later tried to obtain a dissolution of his marriage, but a king who has divorced his wife cannot be crowned by the Cardinal Primate of Hungary, as the Magyar Constitution demands. Thus Goemboes's candidate remained a puzzle. Some suspected an English Prince, others rumoured that it was a German Catholic Prince. But all this was guesswork and Goemboes was not willing to impart information. When he died last year in October, he took his secret to the grave.

The new Premier, Koloman von Darányi, is not an *intransigent* opponent of the Habsburgs, but he does not want to complicate his already difficult position by bringing this dangerous problem into the political spot-light. Thus Hungary continues to be the 'Kingdom without a King,' and there seems to be no early chance that this situation will change.



## CHAPTER XXVI

### DANUBIAN INTEGRATION EFFORTS

'HAVE you heard that Chancellor von Schuschnigg does not go to the Burg-Theater any more?'

'Why?'

'Because he dislikes being reminded by the attendant that he needs a programme.'

Government quarters deny the Nazi allegations that the Austrian Government has no clear-cut and ready programme, and assert that they have a very distinctly defined programme both for home and foreign politics.

In reality, the joke could be applied to any of the neighbouring States, except the two major dictatorships, Germany and Italy, which have programmes only too clear-cut, though somewhat too ambitious. The smaller States can do nothing but 'wait and see,' adapt their respective policies to the changing whims of the major Powers and try to navigate between the conflicting interests of the great. Russia, France, Italy, and Germany, in turn, have supported or opposed one or another country; and between rival aims of the Great Powers there has been a constant shifting of relations between the small countries themselves or in their relations to the Powers.

Some countries, like Austria, being more pliable, have accommodated themselves to the misfortunes suffered through the Great War defeat. Hungary and Bulgaria remained irredentist; Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania adopted an anti-revisionist programme on the basis of the *status quo*. France tried to exploit the policy of those States which had aims identical with hers, namely, the preservation of the situation created by the Peace Treaties; Italy, feeling herself cheated by the other victors, followed a policy of *chantage* (blackmail) and encouraged revisionist aims, too, at least for some years. But the somewhat too provocative methods of the

Third Reich often alienated even her friends. Austria, which should be a natural ally of a non-irredentist Germany, felt threatened by the first signs of Nazi Imperialism. Even in the days when she was a powerful Empire, Austria abhorred a too open show of force and high-handed methods. Persuasion and intrigue were always the methods more preferred by Metternichian politics.

An anecdote says that during the war a German and an Austrian officer were trying to open a bottle of wine. The cork was too fast in the bottle, and the Austrian lieutenant, despite all his efforts, was unable to remove it. Then the German took the bottle in his hand, made one desperate and wild effort, and the cork gave way.

'You see,' said the German captain, 'it goes if you make an effort.'

'Ja, mit Gewalt!' (Yes, with force!) said the Austrian indignantly.

And this same mentality exists today. Austria, like Germany, is ruled by a dictatorial régime. But, although the brutality of the German system is known all over the world, the Austrian dictatorship is by no means a régime of the velvet glove. Nazis and Socialists have suffered, and are suffering by thousands in the prisons because they refuse to accept a mentality imposed from above. There are no murders and tortures in the concentration camps; nor are the wails heard abroad of wives who starve at home while their husbands are in an internment camp. In times like ours such 'trifling incidents' pass unnoticed — when bombs of brothers destroy the population of Madrid by the thousands each month. Yet the Austrian dictatorship is also rigid, if not cruel. When Schuschnigg was recently in Graz, the members of his politically monopolistic Fatherland Front complained about the impertinence of the Nazis and recommended that he use the iron fist against them.

'So you want an open dictatorship?' said Schuschnigg. 'I thought I was being enough of a dictator. A dictatorship is good only if the others don't notice that it is a dictatorship.'

A Europe divided between camps of pro- and anti-Fascist sympathizers, between pro-*status-quo* and revisionist countries, between friends of France, Italy, or Germany, between Catholic Clerical and *Los-von-Rom* groups, has proved a good soil for all intrigues in the rivalry games of the various Powers. The principle of 'divide and rule' has flourished.

When the great economic crisis came over Europe and loans from England and the United States were no longer forthcoming, there

was a growing recognition of the fact that these small countries, despite superficial differences, were dependent on each other. This feeling of interdependence increased when the two Fascist countries, Germany and Italy, clubbed together their resources during the Ethiopian crisis, and concluded afterward the arrangement known as the Rome-Berlin axis. When the 'Four-Power' agreement was made, the small countries became intensely suspicious, but this distrust only increased when on the horizon loomed the danger of a German-Italian agreement at their expense. Since then the endeavours for co-operation amongst the smaller States have become more real. But previously there had been some efforts which were intended to bring these various countries nearer to one another.

The greatest mistakes were committed immediately after the war. The inflamed nationalisms of the newly created small States had destroyed the excellently established economic unit of the old Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This was a capital mistake. It is difficult to argue today about the causes of this disintegration in 1918. It is known that even in Prague there were strong forces as late as October, 1918, which were for the maintenance of the economic unit, not to mention the fact that in the middle of October, 1918, neither the Croats nor the Rumanians of Transylvania, save for a few emigrants abroad, were prepared to sever completely their connection with the Empire. Lord Balfour, who was the second most important delegate of Great Britain at the Peace Conference, told me once that he tried constantly, not only to save the unity of the Austrian Empire, but to maintain the dynasty there. The Earl of Oxford and Asquith assured me that during the conference in Versailles he used all his influence to keep unimpaired the economic unity of the Habsburg Empire. Even some French statesmen realized the foolishness of a dismemberment of the Habsburg Empire. Italy, of course, being a neighbour of Austria and her former rival on the Adriatic, thought to profit by such a mutilation of the Habsburg Empire. And Italian revenge, together with the nationalist megalomania of the small succession States, coupled with the complete exhaustion of the Great Powers, caused the Monarchy to fall to pieces — a disintegration which was by no means inevitable and could have been prevented by statesmanship on the part of the Allied Powers.

The Saint-Germain Peace Treaty (and also the Trianon Treaty) contained one sensible paragraph (Article 222 of the Saint-Germain

Treaty, and Article 205 of the Trianon Treaty), that one which provided that a preferential customs régime should be permitted between Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia in favour of certain natural products and for certain industrial goods specified in such treaties, the preferential régime not to last longer than five years after the signature of the treaty. As the Trianon Treaty was signed in May, 1920, this régime could have lasted until 1925, when naturally the good offices of the Powers could have provided for the extension of this clause. But Czechoslovakia, from the beginning, sabotaged such co-operation. Its economic nationalism was so intense in those days that the otherwise far-sighted Czechoslovak statesmen forgot to deduce the consequences of such a refusal. In 1920, an intelligent Czechoslovakia could have granted (and taken) preferences from a derelict and defeated Austria and Hungary; in 1935, she granted such preferences to Austria, but then only because Italy 'graciously' permitted the agreement to be signed.

Important British and American writers have encouraged this tendency. I remember still my intense disappointment when I read Sir Alfred Zimmern's otherwise so valuable book, *Europe in Convalescence* in 1922. He said:

Those who point the finger of scorn at the Danube area as having been 'Balkanized' can have no first-hand experience of the strength of the passions and enthusiasms which swept the old order away and set to work to build on its site. To reconstitute a Danubian unit because it would facilitate trade, or look more tidy on the map, is a fantastic policy, though it is often recommended by British Liberals. . . . It is through the steady growth of habit, through the authority of Time in investing the new frontier with a sense of permanence, through peaceful co-operation on the firm basis of the accomplished fact, that a sense of unity will grow up. . . . When deep-seated sentiment clashes with commercial convenience, sentiment must be first satisfied, but convenience, in the long run, finds a way into its own. But such adjustments can be hastened rather by sympathetic understanding than by ignorant and irritating criticism.

How wrong, how dangerous was this attitude of 'benevolently let them alone!' Every responsible person, of course, fully realized that with its dismemberment the old Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was dead and buried and could not be resuscitated. But the economic

integration efforts should have started right in the beginning of the existence of the newly born States.

The test of statesmanship is whether it can push through occasionally matters which may be unpopular with the masses, but which give ample guaranties for the future. And such would have been the case of a co-operation effort in 1922. Czechoslovakia would be in a far more firm position today if she had acted otherwise then. She could have offered a better breakwater to the Nazi German waves in 1933-35 if she could have counted at least Austria amongst her absolute friends. Fortunately the worst of the German onslaught on Czechoslovakia seems to be over, though with a régime such as that in Germany one in the position of Czechoslovakia cannot sleep quietly.

Naturally it would be wrong to blame Czechoslovakia alone. The Great Powers are far more responsible for not having dared to exercise an influence on these small States, which would have been beneficial for all. After the opportunity of putting into practice Article 222 of the Saint-Germain Treaty had been missed, there was a second occasion when the statesmanship of the Allies could have shown more grasp of the situation. This was in 1922 when the League of Nations, in principle, granted a loan to derelict and bankrupt Austria.

Already in October, 1922, and later in the spring of 1923, I pointed out repeatedly in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian* that such a loan (if it was meant as a help and at the same time a financial investment, and thus not as alms) should be given only if another effort was made for creating a kind of co-operation between the Danubian States. Then the 'autarchies' were only in their primitive beginnings; there were everywhere signs that all these small national States, whether victors or defeated, were embarking on a dangerous experiment of economic self-sufficiency and isolation. Those who had eyes could see the growing Chinese walls of trade barriers; those who could clearly hear were horrified by the sound of increasing economic nationalism in all countries.

This was the time for the diplomats at the League of Nations to have taken matters into their hands and to have brought a pressure on all these countries to pool their economic resources, which then would have meant an ample guaranty for the recovery of Austria. But when I suggested such a co-operation, Sir William Goode, who

still possessed a great reputation as the President of the Austrian branch of the Reparations Commission, wrote a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* explaining that it was impossible to waste time on such efforts; it was essential first to give financial help to Austria, and after the financial reconstruction had been completed, one could proceed to the economic co-operation problem.

As the diplomats did not intervene, the economic nationalism increased by leaps and bounds. Little Austria, after the war, was left in possession of well-developed and once prosperous industries that had been created to cater to the requirements of an empire of fifty million people. The so-called Succession States erected high protective tariff walls against Austrian products. During the boom period in the inflation days these industries made another fatal mistake. The division of the Empire, for example, had left the textile industries in Austria in an odd situation: the spinning mills were in Austria; the weaving and half-finishing mills in Czechoslovakia. Instead of effecting an agreement between the two industries whereby one country could complement the other's activities, each country developed the part it lacked. Austria built weaving mills, while Czechoslovakia erected spinning factories, thus creating industries twice as large as under the Empire. After the boom both countries discovered their mistake.

Through the influence of the strongest bourgeois party in the Austrian Parliament (the Christian Social Party), an agricultural self-sufficiency movement was created in Austria with the aid of protective tariffs, State subsidies, fees raised for cattle export and so on. Whereas in 1924 Austria was still compelled to import sixty-six per cent of her wheat, twenty-six per cent of her rye, and thirty-five per cent of her barley, today Austria imports less than twenty per cent of her wheat; she is self-sufficient as far as rye and barley are concerned, while she is already exporting potatoes and dairy products. In 1924 Austria imported sixty-nine per cent of her sugar, mostly from Czechoslovakia; today her ten sugar factories cover the whole home supply and in good years there is even a surplus. Her former large hog imports from Poland, Yugoslavia, and Hungary have been considerably reduced.

This development, however, is by no means natural. Where, before the war, the mountains were used for grazing cattle, today rye is grown in altitudes as great as five thousand feet, and wheat as high

as three thousand feet. It is uneconomical to raise wheat at such an altitude. While in the Hungarian lowlands high quality wheat grows without any fertilizer, each ear containing forty to sixty wheat grains, in Austria, with much artificial manure, at the expense of deep fallows, only twenty-five to thirty grains are produced in each spike. The costs of tillage are thus fifty per cent higher, while, counting all overhead charges, the cost of production is three hundred per cent greater than in the Hungarian lowlands.

The Austrian Christian Social Chancellors have conducted a decidedly anti-mercantile policy. Until about five years ago Austria's unfavourable balance arising from foreign trade amounted to forty million pounds. This deficit was compensated by invisible exports, such as tourist traffic, export of cultural products, revenues from foreign investments, and so forth. The German-Austrian conflict and the world economic crisis reduced these invisible exports very considerably. Thus Austria reduced her imports. But this, in turn, was a blow to her exports, too.

Czechoslovakia committed the great mistake of establishing agrarian self-sufficiency. This aim she has almost attained. But with this she lost old and well-tried customers for her industries. She has attempted to gain customers overseas, in Brazil, the Argentine, and in Asia, and for a long time she, indeed, could do a booming business with those countries. But when the economic crisis came, these markets were soon lost. Through six years from 1923 to 1929, Czechoslovakia had prosperous times. But in their newborn national existence the Czechs forgot that even a most efficiently run country can live only if her neighbours prosper. Czechoslovakia, though remaining prosperous longer than her neighbours, suddenly developed a crisis which reached its climax at the beginning of 1933. Imports in 1933 decreased by seventy-one per cent, compared with 1929; exports decreased in the same period by seventy per cent. It is true that since then there has been a steady improvement, and the total trade reached the level of 1931, which naturally was lower than in the boom year 1929, but not so low as in the depression year 1933.

Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Rumania also passed through critical years. They all committed the mistake of establishing various industries in their countries, while the catastrophic fall of the cereal price on the world market after 1929 hit all the agricultural countries of Central and Southeastern Europe.

All these considerations show that the break-up of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire was a serious blow to the economic development of the individual sections. Where before there had been a large unit, now smaller units tried to set themselves up as self-sufficient bodies. In consequence, the number of officials in each country has been increased; expensive armies, much in excess of the old Austro-Hungarian army, are being kept; seven customs barriers exist instead of the one before the war. The cost of production and of export has increased, thus reducing export possibilities. In a big unit such as the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, a boom or a depression had different effects: while the boom in one branch helped to create a corresponding one in other branches, depression could be counteracted very often by a boom in another industry. In small countries, however, the effects of depression are automatically multiplied.

Under these circumstances it is obvious that an integration of the former parts of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, or even of a larger unit, into a customs union, would produce favourable results. Such an integration today, however, is difficult. The nationalism of the newly created States is still too strong to permit their making many sacrifices to the others. Moreover, during the eighteen years' period since the creation of the new States, the vested interests have become so powerful that their abolition would be a difficult matter.

What can one do, for example, with the newly created Czechoslovak or Austrian agriculture? In both countries the landowning classes, mostly peasant, control the course of politics. A customs union between Austria and Hungary, for example, would reduce the price of cattle and cereals in Austria so greatly that the peasants, with their heavy mortgages, would be faced with ruin. In such a customs union, Hungarian industries would be ruined. During the last eighteen years Hungary has developed large textile and engineering industries. The banks financed the establishment of those industries, and their abolition would be a hard blow to the entire credit system of the country. This, in turn, would react on agriculture. Moreover, many aristocrats and gentry, closely connected politically with the rulers of Hungary, have heavy investments in industry and would resist any attempt to abolish this source of income.

We find a similar situation everywhere. Vienna was once famous



for her millinery industry. Women in Prague, Brno, Czernovitz, and Sarajevo wore Viennese hats. On the other hand, Gablonz in Czechoslovakia had an extensive toy and glass-bead industry. After the war Czechoslovakia developed a millinery industry, and Vienna established factories for wares which once were produced in Gablonz. Today both the millinery industry of Vienna and the toy and glass-bead industries of Gablonz are ruined.

If a sudden change is impossible, there at least exist signs of slow progress. The agrarian States were the first to recognize the necessity of attempting some sort of co-operation. An agrarian conference of the most important Eastern and Southeastern European countries was held in Bucharest in June, 1929; and later there was another conference in Sinaia. Then came the Warsaw agricultural conference in August, 1930, which was attended by delegates from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Estonia, Latvia, Finland, and Bulgaria. The scope of the Warsaw conference was wider than that of the previous meetings; agreements were contemplated between the industrial and agrarian States in which the industrial countries were to grant preferential tariffs for agricultural produce. It contemplated the abolition of export duties and all kinds of camouflaged protection. The conference established a permanent secretariat and a research staff. Conferences in Budapest and Belgrade followed, but the price of wheat continued to go down.

The big bombshell in European economic relations fell when in March, 1931, the Austro-German customs union scheme was suddenly announced. This economic alliance was hotly opposed by France, and it is said that French wire-pulling caused the collapse of the Credit Anstalt. It is difficult to check this report, but I know that when the difficulties of the Credit Anstalt were announced, the French Minister in Vienna exclaimed in society: 'And a country with such financial weakness intends to conclude a customs union with another bankrupt!' In any event, the crash of the Credit Anstalt was undoubtedly closely connected with the political danger which a customs union between Germany and Austria might have meant for France and the Little Entente.

The greatest weakness of this Austro-German scheme was that diplomatically it was badly prepared, or rather not prepared at all. With better preparatory work its success was by no means out of

the question. As will be remembered, the Hague International Court gave the judgment against the customs union, not on the basis of the prohibitive clause of the Peace Treaty, but on a clause of the Geneva Protocol of 1922; moreover, the vote was eight to seven. With better diplomatic preparations one of the South American judges probably could have been won over to the Austro-German side. But under these circumstances the union scheme failed, and in consequence Austria got into extreme financial difficulties.

Hardly had the echo of the excitement created by this proposed union died down when an Austrian expert was already working with an Italian colleague to draft the so-called Semmering Agreements which were concluded in May, 1931, and which became the basis of the Rome Protocols. These agreements have already been discussed in the chapter 'Mussolini Makes a Gesture.'

While Germany and Italy made efforts to draw Austria into their economic sphere, France also was compelled to make similar endeavours. At the beginning of March, 1932, André Tardieu, then Premier of France, announced in the Finance Committee of the French Chamber that, with the support of England and Italy, the formation of a customs union between Austria, Hungary, and the countries of the Little Entente, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, would be the right solution for the Danube Basin. This scheme was, of course, still-born. Austria was reluctant in those days to participate in an economic combination from which Germany would be excluded; Hungary was reluctant to participate in a combination in which the Little Entente would predominate; and Germany immediately answered the plan by offering Austria far-reaching economic concessions.

The Tardieu attempt for co-operation was followed by the Stresa Conference with which I have dealt already in a previous chapter. Then followed Mussolini's gesture in the form of the Rome Protocols, based on the recommendations of the Stresa Conference, but even before that the Little Entente formed its economic council and established its political statutes. Thus there were two politico-economic groupings in Central Europe: the countries of the Rome Protocols and the Little Entente.

The developments down to the summer of 1934, however, have only accentuated the existence of these two distinct groupings in the Danube area. At the beginning of 1935, the visit of Laval to Rome,

which was occasioned by the increasing danger of German aggression in Central Europe, brought Italy nearer to France because France then promised far-reaching changes in Central Europe. The Little Entente was closely allied to France; Austria and Hungary to Italy. Thus it was hoped that an Italo-French agreement would yield a *rapprochement* between the systems of the Rome Protocols and the groupings of the Little Entente. The Abyssinian War and its consequences, however, alienated France from Italy, and the German-Italian *rapprochement* followed. Rome and Berlin began attempts to detach at least two of the Little Entente countries from the French alliance system, and for some time these efforts seemed to promise success. But the high-powered wire-pulling of the Fascist States caused the smaller States to be increasingly suspicious of the Imperialist aims of these Powers, and while the smaller, on the surface, try to be polite to the big 'bullies,' they, at the same time, are drawing nearer to each other in a kind of self-protecting spirit. These phases of the Danubian integration efforts will be discussed in a later chapter.

The small countries watch anxiously, of course, the signs of the times, and they instinctively feel that, though the Fascist Powers are arming rapidly and their apparent strength is growing day by day, at the same time the preparedness of the Western Powers is increasing at an even faster pace. In 1924, Mussolini, when meeting the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Momtchilo Nintchitch, said in Rome: 'Our interests in the Adriatic are clashing. There are two ways to settle it: either to fight it out or to make a friendship treaty.' Then he banged the table. The bang was so powerful that Nintchitch decided to choose the treaty of friendship solution. This particular treaty never had any real importance.

When, in the spring of 1937, Mussolini endeavoured, for many reasons, to obtain a friendship treaty with Yugoslavia, he no longer banged the table. He still used blackmail in attaining his aim, but it was different from that of thirteen years previously. This time he said to Yugoslavia: 'I promise non-interference in your internal affairs; I pledge not to support terrorists against your régime; I make a vow to protect your minorities in my country' (a promise which he has refused even to Germany concerning the South Tyrol), 'and I offer you twice as high a quota of trade as you had before. But you must sign this within one week, and my son-in-law, the

Foreign Minister of Italy, must be received before Benes visits Belgrade!' It was bluff and blackmail which had to be accepted. But it had a different tone from the mailed-fist blackmail of 1924. And the small countries, many of whose statesmen used to go to Turkish schools, have a fine ear for these differences. This explains the growing confidence of the small countries in themselves and will probably help the further tedious and long way of Danubian reconciliation.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### A GERMAN GOES TO THE BALKANS

THE European Chancelleries were undoubtedly nervous, and not without good reason, when on June 10, 1936, Hjalmar Schacht, President of the German Reichsbank, began a journey which took him to Belgrade, Athens, Sofia, and Budapest. Schacht made these visits as President of the Reichsbank and not as Minister of Economics. Everywhere he visited the Presidents of the various national banks and negotiated for an increase of trade between Germany and these Balkan countries.

Schacht's move came as a blow to many; and yet students of Southeastern Europe had long been aware of the slow but continuously growing German trade penetration in those parts. For fifteen years after the war, Southeastern Europe was an arena for clashing Italian and French interests: these two Great Powers tried, by one way or another, to win, or force, the smaller countries into their orbit. Now suddenly a third rival appeared on the scene. Germany came and began to reconquer the Balkans. Before the war, next to Austria-Hungary, she was the most important purchaser and purveyor of goods for the Balkans. Moreover, under the rule of Wilhelm, Germany had definite ambitions in the Balkans. The Berlin-Bagdad Railroad, which was the dream of all good German Imperialists, led, after all, through the Balkans.

After the war, especially because of inertia and weakness caused by her defeat in the Great War, Germany could hardly risk bidding for a leading rôle in the Balkans, though even before the economic crisis Germany's trade in Central and Southeastern Europe had assumed great dimensions. In 1928, for instance, 12.9 per cent of the total German exports went to Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, while 8.2 per cent of the total German imports came from these countries. France's exports, mean-

while, went in a different direction, only 1.4 per cent of the French exports being directed to the Danubian States and only 1.6 per cent of her imports coming from these countries. It was somewhat better with Italy, 9.3 per cent of whose export trade went to the Danubian States, while 8.6 per cent of her imports came from these lands.

The world economic crisis which set in at the turn of the decade delivered a blow to German trade in these parts, but not severe enough to prevent an improvement from 1932 onward. Two things came to her help: France began to give up the protection of her satellites in Central and Southeastern Europe, to allow Italy a greater share in the control of these parts. The Franco-Italian *rapprochement*, of which we shall hear more in another chapter, gave Italy greater influence in the Danubian Basin, at the same time that it permitted Mussolini to plan his Abyssinian adventure. And while Italy was attempting to demonstrate her naval and aerial strength in an inglorious Ethiopian conflict, Germany, more subtle, took advantage of the preoccupation of the Powers in the Mediterranean to push forward a clever scheme of economic conquest in the Balkans.

During its early days, National-Socialist Germany concentrated primarily on gaining the friendship of Yugoslavia and Greece. But despite the strong pro-German sympathies in political and army quarters in both countries, friendship with Germany for some time made comparatively little progress. And, as soon as the first impetus of National-Socialist Germany had spent itself, the rulers of Berlin began to listen to the more cautious Hjalmar Schacht, whose theory was that economic penetration must precede political assimilation. Germany's lack of foreign exchange compelled her to draft an entirely new economic policy.

At the beginning of 1935, Germany was engaged in completing her rearmament at the highest speed. To provide means for the purchase of the most necessary raw materials for her industries, a scheme of carefully calculated *Planwirtschaft* (managed economics) was evolved. This planned economy included a scheme for the acquisition of raw materials from abroad. The lack of foreign exchange made it difficult to acquire raw materials from the United States, the British Commonwealth, and from the French Empire. Germany's foreign trade, which in the old days amounted to five hundred million marks per month, had supplied about twenty per

cent of the requirements of the State while the rest was devoted to private industry; today it is the reverse. Eighty per cent of the foreign trade is in the service of rearmament. But as the countries whose trade systems required payment with foreign exchange were gradually closed to her, Germany realized that the Balkans were a potential source of raw materials.

In the Balkans there was no need to pay with the rather scarce *Devisen* and *Valuten* (foreign exchange bills). The calculations of Schacht were subtle and clever. Ever since 1928 the Balkan countries had suffered from a severe economic depression, especially because of the fall of agricultural prices. Moreover, Schacht knew that these countries possessed still unexploited resources which might benefit the German industries both in peace and war. Yugoslavia has not only an ample supply of foodstuffs, but copper mines in Maidan-Pek and Bor, iron ore deposits in Vares and also bauxite. Rumania has oil; while Turkey has cotton, chromium, and other metals useful in the special steel manufacture.

In his scheme Schacht was helped by two factors: first, by the fact that the political friend of the Balkan countries, France, is almost self-sufficing as far as agricultural products are concerned, and, second, by the slow effects of the recommendations of the Stresa Conference of September, 1932. So long as France was able and willing to open her cash-boxes to her allies and provide them with large armament loans, her influence over these countries prevailed. But when the crisis of 1931 made the French banks more cautious and the loans to these countries were curtailed, her hold ceased to be of great practical value. France was unable to buy agricultural produce from these countries, and her influence rapidly waned. When sanctions had weakened Italy as a potential customer for the Balkans, the road was open to Schacht, especially in Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey.

The preferential tariffs recommended in Stresa for agricultural goods benefited Germany as the largest purchaser of Balkan agrarian produce. The Rome Protocol agreements between Italy, Austria, and Hungary, based on these recommendations, helped to raise agricultural prices in Hungary. Germany countered this Italian move, first, by paying the same price in Hungary and Yugoslavia, and later by paying a price thirty per cent above the world market price. The secret of her ability to do this is the exploitation of labour

in Germany. The German worker labours not for forty or even forty-eight hours, but for sixty hours per week, and this at low wages. Clever propaganda and many apparent alleviations, such as holidays for workers and their families under the auspices of the 'Strength Through Joy' organization, make the naïve German worker forget his low wages and meagre diet; and he believes, thanks to Goebbels, that the State looks after him as well as is possible under difficult circumstances. This surplus work of the German workers pays for the thirty per cent extra which the Balkan peasant used to obtain at the beginning of Schacht's campaign for his agrarian produce.

A price thirty per cent above the world market level was such a temptation for the Balkan farmer that no Government could have refused it without risking serious internal trouble. So Germany came and conquered.

The reasons for Schacht's success were more psychological and economic than personal. One reason is the changed morality of our days. In the old days, even in our fathers' time, one of the most debasing things was to be a debtor. Persons who did not pay were incarcerated, and nations which became bankrupt were treated like lepers. But nowadays moral principles are different: if it is not altogether dishonourable to be a creditor, it is certainly regarded as unwise to be one. Altogether Schacht based his system on three axioms: first, that the debtor, and not the creditor, dictates the terms if he knows how to do it; second, that if one lacks gold, then purchases must be effected in countries which accept payment in kind; and, third, one pays, if possible, with armaments because this makes the purchaser-country dependent politically on the land which supplies arms. These principles are not entirely new, and they were employed with varying success in days of yore. But they have never been employed together, and Schacht's merit is in having made a system of it.

The first principle, that the creditor and not the debtor is the person whom one must pity, was always successfully employed by aristocrats. Creditors of indebted aristocrats always were considerate, and repeatedly renewed the credits, hoping that their client would pay some day. They threw good money after bad. Also barter is nothing new—it was the method of commerce in prehistoric and primitive times and is still the commercial form of exchange of goods in certain quite backward parts of the globe.



And the motto, 'Say it with armaments,' is also old. Germany linked Turkey to her side by supplying arms to her; Great Britain built battleships for various countries whose friendship she desired. Though it is true that the armament-makers often supplied with weapons even the arch-enemies of their country, nevertheless, war-time usually found the country which had no munition factories bound to the side of the arms manufacturer's country.

When, in the spring of 1935, the German military clique decided that Germany must rearm, and Hitler denounced the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty in March, Germany required raw materials to complete this rearmament. Even if the greater part of the available foreign currencies was used for the purchase of the most essential prime materials required for armament manufacture, goods which had to be purchased from Great Britain, the United States, France, Holland, or Belgium, the precarious gold reserve position of the Reichsbank did not permit it to buy more ore, cotton, wool, copper, and tin in these 'gold' countries. The rest of the raw materials had to be procured by barter. Thus the attention of Schacht was diverted to the Balkans.

First, exploiting the agrarian crisis in Southeastern Europe, he started to purchase materials: wheat, maize, rye, oats, pigs, vegetable oil, mineral oil, petrol, copper, pyrites, manganese, chromium, cotton, and so forth. By the midsummer of 1936 the frozen credits of these Balkan countries in Berlin amounted to:

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Greece . . . .     | about 33 million Reichsmarks |
| Yugoslavia . . . . | about 21 million Reichsmarks |
| Rumania . . . .    | about 18 million Reichsmarks |
| Bulgaria . . . .   | about 13 million Reichsmarks |

These were enormous sums for the countries involved and the Governments of these countries were anxious to collect their outstanding claims. But, of course, Schacht declared that he could not pay in gold, and that it would be necessary to settle the claims by payments in kind. To arrange such a settlement, Schacht started his famous journey to the Balkans, proceeding first to Belgrade, Sofia, and Budapest, and later in the autumn to Ankara. And each country now began to buy German goods.

German influence became strong in the Balkans. It was, for example, everywhere in evidence in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavs wel-

came the German trader because he replaced, at least for some time, the Italian merchant with whom trade had been interrupted by the sanctions. The Germans, in 1936, were willing to buy so much Yugoslav wheat, maize, and other products that their additional purchases covered sixty per cent of the losses suffered by the elimination of the Italian trade.

Through this move Germany became the most important customer of Yugoslavia. While in the first half of 1935 Italy was Yugoslavia's chief customer with 20.5 per cent of the total trade, and Germany was only second best with 16.88 per cent, by the first half of 1936 Germany bought 25.44 per cent of the total Yugoslav exports. Italy's part in Yugoslav trade in the first half of 1936 was only 1.97 per cent, eleventh on the list of the countries buying Yugoslav exports. As to imports Germany was represented by 23.55 per cent of Yugoslavia's total imports, while Yugoslav imports from Italy constituted only .01 per cent of the total imports.

The tremendous rise of German purchases in Yugoslavia was welcomed at first in Belgrade, especially because the German paid twenty-five to thirty per cent above the world market price for the various Yugoslav agricultural products and for minerals such as bauxite. But when the frozen assets began to increase in Berlin, arrangements were made during Schacht's journey in Belgrade for the reduction of this balance through payments in kind. The Krupps of Essen contracted to reconstruct the Zenitz ironworks at a cost of £750,000, while other orders included bridge construction and railway material to a value of £1,800,000.

Schacht also discovered the vulnerability of Greece — namely, that most of her products are not ordinary commodities but luxuries. Especially he realized the importance for Greece of the sale of tobacco. In 1932 tobacco already constituted 38.5 per cent of the total Greek exports. The Germans began to buy Greek tobacco in large quantities, establishing a kind of purchasing monopoly.

The Germans were aided, not only by the fact that the Hungarian, Polish, Czechoslovakian, and even the Austrian tobacco monopolies were no longer able to purchase in Greece such quantities as before, but also by the fact that Germany had the alternative of buying tobacco in Turkey or in Bulgaria — a fact which was held as a sword of Damocles over the heads of the Greeks. This enabled Germany to use methods toward Greece which amounted to little

less than blackmail, her allies being the Greek tobacco-growers and exporters, who would have threatened revolt if the Government had refused the terms which the Germans offered.

As a result, Greece's frozen assets in Berlin accumulated rapidly. In addition to the already more or less unveiled blackmail, Germany could always play the trump card of the possibility of mark depreciation. This naturally forced the hand of the Greek Government: 'We cannot afford to lose such important sums; if we want to save our money, we must buy more from Germany.' The result was the introduction of quotas and of import licenses which first hit countries which had no barter trade with Greece, namely, Great Britain and the United States.

Naturally the purchases of industrial goods which an agricultural country can make are limited — there is certainly a limit to the absorbing capacity for agricultural machinery, cameras, optical instruments, and aspirin. There was only one commodity which even agricultural countries needed in large quantities: armaments.

Already in August, 1936, Greek armament purchases amounted to twenty-two million marks or seven million dollars, but Schacht could induce General Metaxas, the pro-German Dictator-Premier, to increase these purchases. At the end of January, 1937, Zavitzianos, then Deputy-Premier and Finance Minister, announced that Greek rearmament would cost altogether six milliard drachmae, or about sixty million dollars; Germany would give a loan of four milliard drachmae repayable in five years with three per cent interest; the payments, however, could be effected in kind; that is, in the form of agricultural products. The announcement of the Finance Minister created great surprise, which became even greater when two days later he declared to the assembled journalists: 'Gentlemen, I made a mistake the other day. Not for four milliard drachmae, but only for two and a half milliard (twenty-five million dollars) did we purchase armaments from Germany.' And two days later Zavitzianos resigned.

In Turkey, Schacht had to adopt other methods. In the case of Turkey he could not count on sympathies such as in Belgrade or Athens, for Kamal Atatürk was never a friend of the Germans. But business must be done even with unpleasant partners, and in 1934, Salaheddin Bey, the President of the Central Bank in Ankara, had made the first Turco-German clearing treaty, on the basis of Schacht's

recipe. Turkey was then selling to Germany goods to the value of twenty million Turkish pounds, of which seventeen millions became frozen in Berlin. By the end of 1936, German purchases in Turkey had risen to sixty million Turkish pounds (ten million pounds sterling), which meant that sixty per cent of Turkey's export trade was directed toward Germany. With her increased exports to Germany, Turkey has naturally been compelled to increase her imports from the Reich. The two Turkish five-year plans brought to Germany Turkish Government orders for the establishment of cotton and woolen spinning and weaving mills, steam and electrical power plants, paper mills and cellulose production, artificial silk factories and railway material. Naturally considerable national defence material had also been ordered from Germany. Krupps, for example, obtained an order of fourteen million Turkish pounds for artillery material and shells. Another contract for submarines worth twelve million Turkish pounds was placed in German naval yards; and orders for machines and machine-tools for the establishment of a gun factory to the value of four million Turkish pounds were also given to a German firm, while the Rheinmetall and Krupps received an order for anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns to the value of eight million Turkish pounds. Many squadrons of German Gotha training planes have also been ordered from Germany.

Turkey watched this increased German trade with suspicion. She did not wish to place all her eggs in one basket. Yet, when it came to important Government contracts, the Germans were always ready to underbid the other applicants. Some time ago the Government issued a tender for the installation of new textile mills. There were five nations bidding to obtain the contract: Great Britain, the United States, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. The American offer was too high altogether; the British firm was approached to reconsider its bid, and after some calculation reduced its offer by twelve and one-half per cent. The Swiss cut their original price by twenty-two per cent; the Czechs by even more. Thereupon the Germans cut their offer by fifty-four and fifty-seven per cent respectively. This, of course, was only possible because the difference was paid by the State export subsidies in Germany.

The Germano-Bulgar deal was similar to the methods followed in Greece. Germany's purchases in Bulgaria before 1934 amounted to thirty or thirty-two per cent of Bulgaria's total exports. Bulgaria,

however, was caught in a terrible plight when the United States suddenly ceased to be a buyer of Bulgarian tobacco. The whole tobacco crop of 1928 remained unsold, and was stored in warehouses when in 1934 Germany not only bought the whole crop of that year, but also eighty per cent of the unsold crop of 1928! Bulgaria has to take in return German engineering products, railway material, and armaments. The Bulgars admit that most of the German goods they buy are ten to twelve per cent higher than other countries ask for the same products, but they get thirty per cent more for their tobacco. Moreover, a buyer who takes seventy-five per cent of Bulgaria's chief produce cannot be neglected.

Rumania is in a different position from the others because her chief product, which Germany mostly covets, is oil; and this she is selling chiefly for gold to other countries. To obtain a hold on the oil deposits of Rumania, Germany is making frantic efforts to get a political hold on Rumania, and for this reason the Right extremist movements are being aided by Germany, with the result that she now supplies thirty-seven per cent of the total imports of Rumania!

The sly Herr Doctor Schacht thus came and conquered everywhere. Lo, the poor creditor! The poor Balkan countries had to cajole and humour the powerful financial dictator of Germany and to save their frozen assets by increasing their purchases from Germany. But all these countries, even Bulgaria and Greece, where pro-German sentiment is strongest at present, realize that this is only a makeshift arrangement for years of crisis. Even friends of Schacht in these countries realize that it is not a system which can exist permanently. For this reason they are anxious not to lose old customers. Nevertheless, the German who came to the Balkans saw to it that his country obtained a foothold everywhere and became directly an important economic, and indirectly a political, factor in the Balkans, the most dangerous rival of Italy, France, and all others who care to maintain their trade and influence in the Balkans.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE ITALIAN HAMLET

GREAT BRITAIN has the most unsteady climate and the most steady foreign policy amongst the European countries; while Italy has the steadiest weather conditions and the most fickle foreign policies on the Continent. Austria has been the neighbour of Italy for ages, and people here know Rome. When, therefore, Mussolini's mouthpiece Gayda declared that the Schuschnigg-Mussolini conference in Vienna in April, 1937, had agreed on the inclusion of the Nazis in the Fatherland Front and later in the Government — which amounted to a betrayal of Austria to Germany — most of the world was surprised. But not the Austrians! On this Italian fickleness, the comment of the Viennese man-in-the-street was: 'We never expected anything else. Can you trust Italy? Remember; the Italians were our allies when the war came, and yet they fought on the side of our enemies!'

These words are inspired by the common sense of the Austrian average citizen; but things are not as simple as that. First, it is not quite true that Italy has thrown Austria as a prey to Germany, even if many signs do point in this direction; and second, Italy's position was always very difficult in Europe because of her exposed situation in the Mediterranean and because of her comparative weakness as a Great Power. Unable to afford the luxury of a straightforward and clear-cut foreign policy, she has been obliged to follow always a zig-zag course, full of changes and apparent illogicalness. After the fifteen years of rivalry between France and Italy, Signor Mussolini was faced by another danger: the appearance of a Nazi Germany with her imperialist and extortionist ambitions. This sudden German thrust caused both France and Italy to decide to bury the hatchet and to improve their relations. In the days when Paul-Boncour was France's Foreign Minister, Austria was being slowly abandoned by the French and treated as a 'legitimate sphere of

interest' of Italy. France, having always feared that a co-operation between the two Fascist countries would be the gravest possible danger for her, hoped that such a policy would drive a wedge between Germany and Italy. This wedge was actually driven between the two dictatorships; but the price was, alas, too dear. Austria was abandoned to the 'Roman Wolf,' and Signor Mussolini given a strong hand in the internal policy of Austria. The direct result was, as we have seen, that the Social Democrats of Vienna, deeply hated by Il Duce, were annihilated in February, 1934, and with this the best internal guaranty of Austria's independence was destroyed. It was mainly the fact that Signor Mussolini rushed his troops to the Brenner which intimidated Germany from openly supporting the rebels and carrying through the Nazi *Putsch* of July 25, 1934.

Now was the time for France to settle her feud with Italy; and the French Premier, André Laval, undertook a journey to Rome in January, 1935. The reason for this journey was that Laval believed Italy to be ready to defend Austria against German aggression, and Mussolini, therefore, to be his natural ally in Central Europe, especially because Great Britain, despite Nazi Germany's menacing attitude, had refused to accept definite obligations in these parts. Mussolini was led by various considerations to accept tentatively the offered hand of Laval. In those days he believed in the possibility of Latin solidarity *versus* Teuton — British and German — conceit. The Germans were openly preaching Teuton racial superiority over the other races. For Mussolini it was essential that potential German aggression on the Brenner should be frustrated; and for this the partnership of France was necessary. Only eight years previously Mussolini had spoken of Austria as the 'miserable spittoon'; but with Latin flexibility one could overcome such prejudices easily!

Also there were other, possibly more important, considerations in the mind of the Italian Dictator. Ever since his arrival to power, he had laid even more grandiose plans, the early realization of which became almost a mania. In some of them he required the tacit consent of France, or at least a relation with France which would enable him to deplete his defences on the French frontier without any risk, and which would isolate France from Great Britain in the Mediterranean against the day he should be ready for the foundation of the African Empire plus influence in Egypt. He wanted Abyssinia. The 'shame of Adowa' had to be blotted out. Also he needed Abyssinia as a colony.

'We must have Egypt,' he said to an important Balkan journalist friend as early as 1924. 'Egypt is to us what the Comédie Française is to France. France will be great as long as she has the Comédie Française; and we shall be great only if we can get Egypt.' A strange comparison, but the Duce in those times liked such bizarre comparisons.

The power of the modern dictator can hardly be compared with that of any tyrant in history. The dictator of the twentieth century is not in a position to notice real signs of dissatisfaction or dissension from below, while any disagreement in higher ranks is settled by 'purging' or exiling the critic. The dictator thus comes to believe that his power is unchallenged. This assists the development of a pride which borders on megalomania.

There is not the least doubt that Signor Mussolini sincerely believed, and perhaps still believes, that he is the chosen of the gods to restore to Rome the military and imperial glory of its ancient Emperors. He reached this belief by a long route. As a Socialist journalist he learned from Henri Bergson the philosophy of the *élan vital*; from George Sorel the philosophy of violence; from Friedrich Nietzsche he learned to despise the masses, and from Machiavelli he absorbed the philosophy of cynicism in political rule. At the height of his power, Mussolini became interested in Napoleon. As a result of these studies he wrote the drama *Campo di Maggio*, in which he reached the conclusion that Napoleon failed because he had French and not Italian soldiers at his disposal. His later studies concerned the lives of the Roman Emperors; and recently he has completed a play about Julius Caesar.

Rome's historic past has filled his mind for many years. Twelve years ago he ordered the demolition of the slums and jerry-built tenement houses round the Victor Emmanuel II monument, thus 'liberating' the forums of the Caesars. Between the Forum of Trajan and Augustus he constructed a wide road which is now called the Via dell' Impero. On a wall at the lower end of this road, near the Basilica of Constantine, have been fixed four huge bas-relief maps showing the development of the Roman Empire during a thousand years. The first map shows Europe in the year 800 B.C.; on it Rome is only a small white speck. The second map illustrates the position in the year 146 B.C., at the end of the Punic War, when the whole peninsula was in Rome's possession and parts of Iberia and Greece



as well as Carthage (the Tunis of today) belonged to her. The third map shows the extent of the Roman Empire at the death of Emperor Augustus in A.D. 14; the fourth depicts the empire under Trajan in the year A.D. 117, when Britain, France, the whole of Southern Europe, and Northern Africa, including Libya and Egypt, as well as Asia Minor, Syria, and what is today the Kingdom of Iraq, belonged to the Roman dominion. School-children of all ages are taken to these maps and the glory and greatness of their ancestors are pointed out to them.

Years ago one had to pay an entrance fee to visit the ruins of the Forum and the Palatine, which then were just 'exhibits' for foreign tourists and students of archaeology. Mussolini has thrown open the Forum and the Palatine to everybody; and the youth of Rome are taken frequently and in large numbers to study the achievements of their great predecessors.

In his book, which is a sort of compendium of Fascist philosophy, Mussolini wrote:

The Fascist State is the will to power and domination. The Roman tradition becomes herewith an idea of might. In the Fascist doctrines the Imperium is not only a territorial, military, and mercantile expression, but is a spiritual and moral idea. One can imagine an Imperium, that is, a nation which governs other nations, without necessitating the conquest of a single square mile of land. The endeavour for the Imperium — that is, for the extension of the nation — is for Fascism an expression of life; its opposite, the static spirit, is a sign of decay. Nations which are being created or which are reborn are Imperialistic; only dying countries renounce. Fascism, therefore, is the most suitable doctrine to represent the inclinations and spirit of a people who, like the Italian nation, have been reborn after many centuries of neglect and foreign rule.

In the same book Mussolini declared that only battle and wars ennoble peoples.

If these doctrines are taken into consideration, it is easier to understand the meaning of the Italian adventure in Africa. Undoubtedly the Abyssinian campaign was intended to be only the first step in a campaign to restore, slowly and imperturbably, yet indomitably, the 'glory that was Rome.' This lesson has been hammered unceasingly into the little heads of the young *balillas* and 'wolf cubs.' The *Avanguardisti* and the growing youth, as well as the grown-up

Fascist, have been imbued with the same spirit. The young men sent to Africa departed with the belief that they were going to face possible death in order that the foundations of empire might be laid.

It is, of course, impossible to argue with Fascists about the League of Nations or its Covenant. A movement whose leader has written that 'pacifism is an escape from fight, a cowardice in the face of sacrifice,' cannot have any respect for the League, because this institution was brought into existence to destroy and replace precisely the spirit which dominates Fascist Italy. When the League of Nations enforced sanctions against Italy in 1935, the Fascists argued:

'Why did the Powers not employ sanctions in the case of Manchuria? Why were not sanctions demanded when Germany repudiated the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty? On these occasions a formula was found by which the letter of the League's Covenant was saved, although its spirit was violated. Why, then, was it not possible to find a formula when Italy had a good case?'

During the Italo-Ethiopian War less responsible Fascists often declared that also Egypt 'ought' to belong to Italy. 'It is an impossible situation,' they say, 'that another Power should be in the position to close the Suez Canal, the only artery of traffic to our colonies.' Others said indignantly: 'It is outrageous that another nation should be able to bottle us up in the Mediterranean — at Gibraltar and at Suez! We must end this anomaly!'

The victory in Abyssinia has made Italy even more Mediterranean-minded. The old cry *Mare Nostrum* is again heard, but this time not referring to the Adriatic, but to the blue waves and the rocky shores of the Mediterranean. Gibraltar and the Spanish hinterland, Oriental Africa, Egypt and the Sudan have become the chief interest of the true Fascist.

The African campaign had been prepared for many years clandestinely and carefully. Expert Italian students, amongst them the able Corrado Zoli, had been sent to study all phases of Abyssinian life; other Italian experts had been and still are entrusted with the careful study of Egypt and the Sudan. Yet others had been sent to survey the territory and to study conditions in Spain. Thus, when France's tacit consent to the Abyssinian conquest was gained during the Mussolini-Laval conversations in Rome in January, 1935, the road was opened for the attack on Ethiopia.

Great was the disappointment of Mussolini when he noticed that

British resistance was greater than he had expected it to be, and even greater was his anger at France's hesitating attitude, which did not go far enough to permit Britain to establish effective sanctions and yet caused immense privations for Italy by permitting at least the milder forms of economic sanctions. The Abyssinian adventure was necessary, not only because Mussolini had long contemplated the re-establishment of the Roman Empire, but also because it is in the nature of Fascist dictatorships that they must seek political successes abroad. Up to 1935 almost every foreign political attempt of Mussolini in Europe had resulted in failure. Albania, which in 1925 undoubtedly helped him to a great success, became hesitant and suspicious in 1931 when fresh Italian loans failed to appear. Also, Italy's Albanian policy brought her into conflict with Yugoslavia, who watched with alarm the settlement of Italians on her side of the Adriatic. Italy and Yugoslavia were for more than a decade often on the verge of war. Today Italy is seeking the friendship of Yugoslavia. All Italian schemes to dominate the Balkans were defeated by the clever and persistent policy of King Alexander of Yugoslavia. After twelve years of Balkan intrigues which brought her into open conflict with France and with France's allies, Italy had to withdraw entirely from the Balkan Peninsula and stand by while a Balkan Alliance was formed — an alliance which could hardly be described as pro-Italian. Again, a short period of friendship with Turkey was followed by ten years of strained relations between the two countries. These strained relations have now been ameliorated; but Turkish suspicion of Italy has not yet altogether disappeared.

Mussolini, of course, had a temporary success in Austria, but this again brought him into conflict with Nazi Germany, a régime which he 'nursed' for many years and which later became his chief opponent. When the Abyssinian War was about to break out, I asked influential and well-informed Fascists in Rome about the possible repercussion of the Abyssinian War on 'the watch on the Brenner.' They replied that the manoeuvres of 'half a million men' (which were held in August, 1935) on the Brenner showed clearly that Italy was stronger than ever on that front.

'Moreover,' I was told, 'we are not the gendarmes of Austria. The independence of Austria naturally is important to us, but it is equally important to France and Great Britain. The independence

of Austria is not an Italian but an international question.'<sup>1</sup> In those days the Italians were confident that, if things came to the worst, they were strong enough to defy Germany in Austria. But it was equally evident that with German rearmament proceeding at its autumn, 1935, pace, Germany was bound to become so strong about two years hence that Italy would have no chance to resist her onslaught on Austria.

The Abyssinian crisis created an entirely new situation in Europe. Italy and Great Britain, up to then friends in the Mediterranean, became bitter opponents. Italy and France ceased to be friends because of the sanctions. And the Northern Fascist Power, Germany, realized that the economic sanctions imposed upon aggressive Italy were, in reality, only a general rehearsal for a much bigger action against her should she attempt too often to surprise the world with *faits accomplis*.

Hitler disliked Mussolini as much as the Duce disliked the Fuehrer, who, on the occasion of their only meeting, in 1934, at Stra, he had decided was talkative and 'common.' But the leader of Germany felt instinctively that the campaign against Italy within the League was an attempt to throttle dictatorships in general and that the democracies were assailing the weaker one first. Opposition was increasingly felt, though not outwardly visible in both dictatorships. It was not necessary to be an augur to know that the increasing financial and economic difficulties would seriously shake the Fascist Powers, though this quake might not be strong enough to upset them. Nevertheless, partly the fear of the co-operation of the democracies against Fascism, partly increasing difficulties at home, caused a serious section of the National-Socialist Party in Germany (as well as the *Reichswehr*) and the younger and more adventurous group of the Fascist Party in Italy to reach the decision that divergences between the two dictatorships should be put aside at least sufficiently to enable them to construct a common defence against 'Bolshevik attacks.'

The Italian Hamlet was contemplating. In spite of his dislike of Hitler: 'To be or not to be, this is the question'; and Hamlet listened to those who counselled reconciliation. This reconciliation was prompted by an idea which had haunted Mussolini's mind since 1935: intervention in Spain. Now that Abyssinia had been

<sup>1</sup>See *Manchester Guardian*, September 21, 1935.

conquered, it was essential to gain a foothold on the Iberian Peninsula, and if possible in Morocco. But this it was impossible for him to do alone. Let Germany be the partner, he said. There was, however, a stumbling block in the way of a reconciliation with the Northern Fascist State, and this was Austria. It was necessary to arrange somehow the Austro-German feud. Von Hassel, the German Ambassador in Rome, then found a dove to bring the olive branch in the person of Herr Franz von Papen, ex-Chancellor of Germany, sentenced to death on June 30, 1934, and at present Hitler's Special Envoy and Ambassador in Vienna.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### HERR VON PAPEN BRINGS THE OLIVE BRANCH

IN PRE-WAR days a diplomat had to take all precautions that nothing untoward should become known about his more or less obscure negotiations with friends and foes, that the necessary secrecy should be meticulously observed; moreover, it was essential that he should not be involved in any affair which would cast a shadow on his character (as a diplomat)! If a diplomat offended against these rules in days of yore, his career was finished, however valuable his services might have been to the country he represented.

During his wartime and post-war career, Herr Franz von Papen has repeatedly violated these rules, and yet he is still Hitler's Special Envoy and Ambassador in Vienna. It is well remembered that in Washington during the war he forgot in a taxi an attaché-case containing plans for bombing Allied ships on the high seas. It not only damaged Germany that this plot should be exposed, but compromised von Papen's collaborators, including the Austrian Embassy.

This deed alone would have sufficed in 'the old days' to finish Herr von Papen's career. But it did not even cure him of carelessness. He was expelled from the United States; on the high seas a British warship searched his boat and found in his possession, not only some more compromising documents, but also the stubs of a cheque-book in which he had registered the payments to various German agents in the United States, thus supplying the British, and through them the American, authorities with a list of all the major German secret-service employees in the United States! During recent years he has used methods which resemble more the practices of commercial salesmen and agents than the accepted working methods of a diplomat.

If the purpose justifies the methods, then von Papen's somewhat boorish means have been more than justified by subsequent events.

It is a well-known fact that von Papen, then Vice-Chancellor of Germany, escaped execution only by a miracle on the fateful June 30, 1934, during the sanguinary purge in Nazi Germany which cost the lives, not only of many notorious Nazis such as Roehm and Ernst, but also of many straightforward and decent persons such as the former Chancellor and War Minister General von Schleicher, or Herr von Bose, Papen's faithful Catholic collaborator in Berlin.

Thereafter Hitler, probably out of thankfulness for the help rendered him in his bid for office in 1933, tried to save von Papen. After long consideration the Austrian Government agreed to von Papen's appointment to the post of Minister in Vienna. Although a delay is usual before a diplomatic appointment is accepted, it may be doubted whether Austria's delay was purely diplomatic. His record might well have given pause to any foreign Government: besides compromising himself during the war, in 1932 and in January, 1933, he had sold out his former party and his former colleague, General von Schleicher, to prepare the way for Hitler; and as Hitler's colleague, he was bound to share the responsibility for Nazi terrorism in Austria. As former Commissioner of the Saar, he had failed to make his colleagues or subordinates give heed to the feelings of that Catholic population; and as signatory of the Reich's Concordat with the Vatican, he had failed to get his promises observed. Was it a wonder that Austria viewed with some distrust and concern his appointment to the Legation in Vienna?

The avowed aim of the appointment of von Papen was the expressed wish of Hitler to establish better relations between the two German States. But the endeavours of von Papen to improve the badly shaken relations between the two countries seemed for a long time to remain futile. The Catholic Clericals of Chancellor Schuschnigg's following distrusted von Papen, probably under the influence of the Vatican. The devout Catholics in Austria not only resented the persecution of their co-religionists in the Third Reich, but mistrusted von Papen because they held him responsible for the failure of the Concordat in Germany. It was believed for some time that Italy was attempting to frustrate these attempts at *rapprochement* between Germany and Austria, which was probably true until the autumn of 1935.

After the beginning of the Italo-Abyssinian War, however, Italy became anxious to humour Germany. At the time of the Bolzano

manoeuvres in August, 1935, it was obvious that Mussolini was making every effort to cajole the Germans. At the big banquet given after the manoeuvres, the German General, leading the army delegation from the Third Reich, was seated at Mussolini's side; moreover, only the American and German correspondents were invited to this dinner. In August, 1935, a tacit Italo-German agreement was concluded for a newspaper truce, which was scrupulously kept, the press in each of the two countries ceasing to attack the other.

Under the weight of the attitude of the Great Powers, such as Great Britain and France, and because of the refusal of the League of Nations to accept his concept of the conquest of Abyssinia, Mussolini had contemplated a return to his old idea of Italo-German co-operation. When the Nazis were only an opposition party, he had in mind the conclusion of an alliance with the future Nazi Germany, and his plans of collaboration between two such Fascist countries met the approval of Hitler, who always pleaded for a co-operation of Germany with Great Britain and Italy. But the development of the Austrian question was a stumbling-block in the way of an understanding when the Nazis became powerful. As I have already pointed out, in the autumn of 1932, only a few months before the rise of Hitler to power, Mussolini sent his trusted agent, Signor Eugenio Morreale, to negotiate with the Fuehrer in Munich. The condition was that the Austrian *Heimwehr*, known to be the satellites of Italy, should become the armed political organization in an independent, though Nazi-Fascist Austria. When Hitler stuck to his handful of trusted S.A. and S.S. supporters in Austria, the negotiations were broken off, and there ensued a bitter fight culminating when Mussolini mobilized his troops on the Brenner in July, 1934, after the assassination of Dollfuss.

Now Italy was ready to make up the feud once more. But Austria offered opposition. The situation was different from the autumn of 1932: since then Hitler had obtained power in Germany, repudiated the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty, and begun to create a powerful German army. On the other hand, Mussolini wanted to conquer Abyssinia, and as he saw himself 'betrayed' by Laval, he turned more toward Germany. While the Nazi Party in Germany and the National Socialists in Austria were viewing with undisguised glee the growing entanglement of Italy in Abyssinia, hoping that this would give the chance for the long-awaited 'spontaneous rising'



in Austria which should incorporate this country into the Third Reich, the more responsible quarters were somewhat nervous about these hopes of the Radicals in the party both within and without the country. Especially the *Reichsaussenministerium* (the German Foreign Office), and to a certain extent also the *Reichswehr*, wished to avoid an entanglement because of Austria. General von Seeckt, the founder of the modern post-war *Reichswehr*, told an Austrian friend of mine soon after the war: 'We Germans' (meaning the *Reichswehr*) 'do not want the *Anschluss*; all we wish for is a friendly Austria whose divisions will be at our disposal if another major war comes.' This has always been the policy of the *Reichswehr*.

Wilhelmstrasse realized that a direct or indirect attack on Austria would bring complications with Great Britain, even if that country were not willing to intervene directly in such a conflict. But their endeavours to gain Britain's friendship would be badly shattered by such an Austrian *Putsch*. Under these circumstances, it seemed sensible to accept the hand outstretched by Mussolini. Moreover, Hitler had become irritated and nervous when the League of Nations began to employ sanctions against Italy. General Goering, the leader of the more conservative wing of the Nazi Party, was also for a reconciliation with Italy.

Already in August, 1935, Mussolini had frequent conversations with the German Ambassador in Rome, Herr von Hassel, and the Ambassador then proceeded to Berlin and Berchtesgaden. In the same month von Papen also paid a visit to Hitler in Berchtesgaden. Later in the autumn both von Hassel and von Papen repeatedly visited Germany.

Von Papen then came to Vienna to attempt another reconciliation between Germany and Austria: a reconciliation was necessary to pave the way for the future Italo-German reconciliation. Shortly before Christmas, 1935, von Papen made another direct effort with Egon Baron von Berger-Waldenegg, then Austrian Foreign Minister. He handed to von Berger-Waldenegg a memorandum on the methods by which, in his opinion, the relations between the two German countries might be improved. In political quarters in Vienna these were often referred to as 'Herr von Papen's seven points,' but well-informed quarters are inclined to believe that in reality there were only 'five points.' Four of these five proposals were:

The establishment of a newspaper truce between Germany and Austria.

A complete amnesty for all Austrian legionaries and exiles in Germany.

At least one 'nationally oriented' person to be included in the Austrian Government.

The improvement of commercial relations, including tourist traffic, and the abolition of the German one-thousand-mark levy on visitors from Germany to Austria.

The fifth proposal is so far unknown to me, but probably it was a suggestion of a more anti-Semitic and racial policy which would bring Austria into line with Germany.

The memorandum, however, was not signed nor even initialled. When questioned, von Papen was unable to guarantee whether these points represented the views of Hitler or of the Wilhelmstrasse. Baron von Berger-Waldenegg thereupon told von Papen that he was going to Styria on a holiday, and that he would study the proposals carefully in his Styrian home. Several weeks lapsed, and no answer was given by Austria except on the newspaper truce. Thus ended, at least for some time, the direct negotiations between Germany and Austria.

It seems, however, that there must have been negotiations between Germany and Italy aimed at the elimination of the Austrian question during the period of tense international relations at the time of the Abyssinian War. I learned then from a trustworthy source that in those critical days the Deputy-Leader of the National-Socialist Party of Germany, Herr Rudolf Hess, summoned seven hundred leaders of the Austrian Legion and told them that the Fuehrer considered it essential for the time being to eliminate the Austrian question from active politics, and instructed the legionaries to abandon all underground or other activities in Austria. He added that this did not mean the abandonment of Hitler's efforts to gain this German country for the Reich, but that for reasons of practical politics it was essential to abandon any agitation for the time being.

This announcement of Hess created a deep impression amongst the legionaries, and an even deeper impression in Salzburg and Innsbruck when the Nazis learned of this 'great betrayal.' It was rumoured then in Austria that the reason for Hitler's change of policy was that recently he has been troubled about the possible

consequences should Mussolini fall. He then thought that the collapse of the Fascist régime in Italy was bound to have a repercussion in Germany, and for this reason he wished to eliminate anything which would complicate Mussolini's position at home.

A new phase of negotiations was started in the early part of the summer of 1936, this time not between Germany and Austria, but between Germany and Italy. When the Left Government came to power in France, and the Abyssinian War failed to bring an open conflict between Great Britain and Italy, the National-Socialist leaders of the conservative wing in Berlin, supported by Wilhelmstrasse and the army, began to prepare for the co-operation of the two Fascist countries against the 'danger of Bolshevism.' Herr von Hassel was chiefly responsible for the success of these negotiations. But there remained the stumbling-block of the Austrian question. Suddenly the Austrian Chancellor, von Schuschnigg, was invited to Italy. He met Mussolini at the Duce's home farm at Rocca delle Camminate, near Forlì, where Il Duce always retires if he intends to make a major decision. Here in the intimate *entourage* of Mussolini's country home the conditions of a possible agreement were discussed. The Austrian Chancellor insisted that two principles should be recognized by Germany — namely, those of Austrian independence and of non-interference.

This decision in principle facilitated the development of friendly Italo-German relations. Already on June 16, 1936, German-Italian negotiations were opened, this time allegedly to come to a settlement of various economic problems.

On June 23, Countess Ciano, who is Mussolini's eldest daughter, Edda, arrived in Cologne following an invitation of the Governor of the Rhineland. A few days later, on June 28, it was reported that Count Ciano, von Hassel, and the Austrian Minister in Rome, Baron von Berger-Waldeneegg had signed in Rome certain agreements which concerned the increase of exports and imports between Germany and Italy. In reality, this tri-party conversation was an important milestone!

Though even in April, 1936, things looked very sombre and the more sensational press in the United States and in Great Britain was alarmed about the possibility of a Nazi *coup d'état* in Austria, by the end of June relations had improved rapidly, and on July 7, 1936, I reported in the *Manchester Guardian* that the negotiations between Austria and Germany were almost complete.

Herr von Papen now accelerated the pace of negotiations. The mediator between von Papen and von Schuschnigg was Doctor Friedrich Funder, the editor-in-chief of the Catholic-Clerical Government organ *Reichspost*. At the beginning of July, von Papen saw von Schuschnigg personally, at which meeting the conditions of the Austro-German Treaty were outlined, and after that von Papen proceeded to Berlin and Berchtesgaden. It is said that Hitler almost had a fit when he had to sign the document. But signed it was, and von Papen returned to Vienna with the olive branch. On July 11, a joint *communiqué* was issued in both Berlin and Vienna which announced that the Austrian and the German Governments had decided to establish normal and friendly relations, and that following the declaration of the Fuehrer and Chancellor of May 21, 1935, the Reich Government recognized the full sovereignty of the Austrian State; that both countries considered the internal structure of the other, including the question of Austrian National Socialism, as internal affairs only of each country; that Austrian policy should be conducted in a fashion by which Austria acknowledged herself to be a German country.

Hearty telegrams were exchanged not only between Hitler and Schuschnigg, but also between the two and Mussolini, while Premier Goemboes was also duly informed about the result of the agreement. The Austrian statesmen, however, emphasized emphatically in interviews and conversations that the agreement did not affect the internal policy of the country in the least. Nevertheless, it soon became obvious that Schuschnigg had had to yield on some points: two persons known to be 'nationally minded' were included in the Government, namely Doctor Guido Schmidt, up till then Vice-Director of the personnel office of President Miklas, and Colonel Edmond Glaise-Horstenau, Keeper of the War Archives in Vienna and an Austrian officer who had had excellent connections with the German General Staff during and after the war. Doctor Schmidt is a young man, of the same age as Chancellor Schuschnigg — in fact, they were schoolmates in the Jesuit school Stella Matutina in Feldkirch, Vorarlberg. This school, while bringing up the youth in a strictly Catholic Clerical spirit, always imbued Pan-German ideas, and before the attack of the Nazis on the Catholic Church, Schuschnigg also belonged to that wing of the Christian Social Party which was Pan-German in sentiment. But while Schuschnigg dissociated

himself from the Pan-German idea in 1933, Schmidt retained his national sentiment even after this date. Glaise-Horstenau was in close contact with the army quarters in Berlin, and this induced him to follow a clear pro-German policy. But later events have proved that both Schmidt and Glaise-Horstenau were less 'dangerous' than another new member of the reconstructed Cabinet, Baron Neustaedter-Stuermer, who in the old days was a well-known *Heimwehr* leader, and who, in July, 1934, conducted the famous negotiations between the rebels in the Chancellor's office and the provisional Schuschnigg Cabinet. This man, who had played a prominent part in defeating the Nazi *Putsch* three years before, proved suddenly the most dangerous *Brueckenbauer* (bridgebuilder), as persons are called who try to level the path of National Socialism in Austria. Under his régime as Minister of Public Security, the secret organization of the Nazis was much encouraged. A committee of seven members was set up in which 'nationally oriented' persons, most of whom were merely camouflaged Nazis, discussed means and ways for achieving the secret Nazification of the country. One of the most important men in the committee was Captain Josef Leopold, of Krems, a former officer of the army, and once the leader of the illegal storm troops of the Nazis in Austria. He was in the Woellersdorf concentration camp for a long period because of his Nazi activities, but was released under the terms of the amnesty proclaimed on July 25, 1936, after the conclusion of the Austro-German agreement. Neustaedter-Stuermer was removed from the Schuschnigg Government on March 20, 1937, an action which displeased both Berlin and Rome.

The regulation of the relations between Berlin and Vienna paved the way, in turn, for the improvement of Italo-German relations. In the fourth week of October, 1936, Count Ciano paid a visit to Baron von Neurath, the German Foreign Minister in Berlin, and later on visited the Fuehrer in Berchtesgaden. The agreement which was effected in Berchtesgaden was undoubtedly one of the momentous agreements which were bound to shape the destiny of Europe. Being concluded between two Fascist States, naturally it did not bring much promise to those who believe in peace, freedom, and international co-operation. Mussolini hoped that he would gain Germany to an energetic and definite co-operation in the Mediterranean against Great Britain. But Hitler was not willing to embark

on such a far-reaching policy, which would have alienated England from Germany. When, however, this anti-British co-operation was turned down in Berchtesgaden, Italy refused to go as far against Soviet Russia as Germany wanted her to go. In any event, on many important questions the two Fascist States came to an agreement. Thus, they agreed to follow a common policy concerning the coming Western Locarno negotiations, in which they hoped to be able to exclude Soviet Russia from any system of collective security. They decided to sabotage as much as possible the idea of collective security and the collective institution for the maintenance of peace, as well as to work against the League of Nations — Italy from within, Germany from without. Italy agreed to certain German prerogatives in Southeastern and Central Europe, while in Spain the two Fascist States agreed to support General Franco with men and arms. Italy agreed to possible German expansion in Morocco, as well as a sphere of influence in the Basque country, where are to be found valuable iron ores and pyrites which are needed by the German armament industry, and Rome promised to support German colonial claims. An anti-Bolshevik crusade was also decided upon — a platform to which Italy consented only to humour Hitler. (This crusade was conducted by Germany with great violence and vigour for some time, but then showed signs of petering out.)

This agreement between Germany and Italy then showed its effect in many ways in European politics. The negotiations about the Western Locarno were held up by it, and the Spanish situation turned from bad to worse, because now Soviet Russia started a competition with Germany and Italy in sending volunteers and arms as well as munitions to Spain. The German *Reichswehr* was, however, more cautious than Italy. Only small groups of *Reichswehr* were sent to Spain, and even these were kept away from the firing line. On the other hand, the Italian contingent, while achieving a success in Malaga, suffered a reverse on the Guadalajara front near Madrid so serious that it greatly perturbed Mussolini, because now it was obvious that the Fascist bluff could no longer work with safety as it had in the past. Mussolini now knew that in the future he was to play only second fiddle to Germany whose power was growing week by week.

Mussolini probably would have preferred a return to the Stresa front as a safer arrangement for Italy. But by the end of 1936, he



DOCTOR EDUARD BENEŠ  
Former President of the Czechoslovak Republic.

began to show signs of growing weakness and nervousness, and his young, ambitious, and not too intelligent son-in-law was driving him more and more into the German camp. It is said that Edda Mussolini and her husband were immensely impressed by German Nazi efficiency and organization, and that their pressure inspired the Duce to return to the old dream of Italo-German co-operation. Thus fate reached the Duce: all his life he had boasted that he never trusted anybody and never permitted anyone to grow beyond a limit permitted by him, and yet his untalented, unprepared, and boasting son-in-law was driving him into a policy which he instinctively disliked from the beginning. Naturally a real German-Italian co-operation is just as impossible as was the dream of an Austro-Russian co-operation before the war.

Whatever may be the opinion of Ciano (who is alleged to have said that it did not matter at all if Germany was on the Brenner), Italy can never tolerate that Austria should be absorbed by Germany, nor can she permit the control of Yugoslavia by Germany. But for the time being the two Fascist countries have had to come to an agreement, first, to defend their form of rule, which is constantly assaulted by the Western democracies, and, second, because the two 'card-sharpers' intended to blackmail the man with the fat pocket-book. For this purpose the Rome-Berlin axis has been created — an axis which has only the bearings and no axle, remarked a friend of mine. It is the revolt of the 'Have-Nots' against the 'Haves.'

As long as Germany and Italy were fighting each other and their interests were visibly colliding, all small countries courted and cajoled both countries. But since the establishment of the Rome-Berlin axis these small countries have realized that the 'friendship' of the two Fascist Powers is being maintained at their expense. While pledged to be friendly to both, all the small States began to seek ways and means to become independent of the two blackmailers and to draw nearer to each other in the hope that their growing solidarity might save them from absorption by one or the other Power or from annihilation by both.

It is also realized that while the co-operation of the two Fascist Powers for the time being is mainly a *chantage* against the Western Powers, this *chantage* may become a real co-operation. Should Great Britain and France fail to pay the price that Italy and Germany demand for their co-operation, then naturally the danger of



a German-Italian alliance may grow greater. But as a neutral diplomat in Vienna rightly remarked: 'The danger of an Italo-German alliance remains a danger only until it is visualized as such. Should it once become a reality, it ceases to be a danger. Then it will create only a more formidable counter-coalition against itself.'

## CHAPTER XXX

### A NEW SPECTRE LOOMS ON THE HORIZON

IN POLITICS instinct is often more important than logic, and he who seeks to reach conclusions by deduction is more often wrong than he who relies primarily on instinct.

On April 19, 1936, the Austrian army, soon after the proclamation of Austria's independence from the clauses in the Saint-Germain Treaty concerning military service, had its spring parade. It was a parade more spectacular than the previous ones; and forty tanks, about twenty armoured cars, anti-aircraft guns, and a battery of six-inch guns were shown. Italy and Hungary as well as the *Reichswehr* sent a large military deputation, the last-named under the command of Lieutenant General List. After the parade I was watching with some colleagues when the German, Italian, and Hungarian delegations drove to the Imperial Hotel where the Austrian General Staff gave a lunch in their honour. When two important Balkan journalists, who stood with me, noticed that the officers and military attachés of the other nations had been excluded from this luncheon, one of them exclaimed: 'Bogami, here is the new constellation in Central Europe — Berlin and Rome working together, with Austria and Hungary taken in tow!'

Balkan people — more primitive and for that reason more unspoiled — have more natural instincts than the civilized Western European observers have. To some of us, German-Italian co-operation appeared at that time almost impossible. It is true that even then there had been some informal conversations through the medium of von Hassel and von Papen, but the dividing factors appeared to be more numerous than the uniting links. The Balkan urbanite was right. As we have seen, only three months later, the Germano-Austrian Treaty was concluded, while another three months later the Rome-Berlin axis was established.

France hardly had recovered from the shock of this Rome-Berlin axis when another menace appeared on the horizon — the spectre of a possible Russo-German co-operation. Until early summer such a co-operation still appeared unlikely; the two countries are deeply divided by ideological differences and can unite only when the impossible becomes possible, namely, when Hitler ceases to denounce Red Bolshevism and Josef Stalin discards the idea of World Revolution. And yet, every Central-European country must keep in mind that the hatreds of today sometimes do become the friendships of tomorrow. For fifteen years Germany concentrated all her hatred and venomous propaganda on Poland! And then came the sudden Poland-German Treaty of January, 1934, which bridged over the worst differences.

The Italian politicians, just as much as their colleagues in the minor Central and Southeastern European States, have to fear two major dangers: Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism. Russia is today devoting her energies to the reconstruction of her immense territory; but is she not also becoming once more Imperialist, many ask? Hence, with the revived fear of Pan-Germanism there has arisen also in many Eastern European minds the fear of Pan-Slavism. The board is being reset. Under the fear of German expansion, the Eastern States and the countries of the Little Entente concluded pacts of non-aggression with Russia back at the beginning of the present decade.

The Franco-Soviet and the Czechoslovak-Soviet pacts of mutual assistance, concluded in May, 1935, drew Soviet Russia away from any German orientation, and in the face of the mutual dangers from Berlin, the three countries created an alliance system which was the direct result of the breakdown of the attempts of an efficient system of collective security.

Then followed the unfortunate Spanish interlude. During the negotiations conducted by Germany and Italy for the elimination of their differences, the revolution of General Franco in Spain also played a rôle. The outbreak of the Spanish civil war brought about the intervention of the Fascist Powers on Franco's side, while Bolshevik Russia naturally supported the Madrid Government in its fight against Fascist supremacy. In this struggle the sympathies of Socialist France were, of course, on the side of the Madrid, and later, of the Valencia, Government; but under Great Britain's in-

fluence France was subsequently won to a policy of non-intervention, a fact which produced a certain alienation between Paris and Moscow.

'What is Great Britain up to? We do not understand her policy,' Litvinoff declared to a friend early in 1937. While at the end of 1936 Germany was fervently engaged in bringing about an anti-Communist Front in Europe, the Continent was breaking rapidly into three camps: a Bolshevik, an anti-Bolshevik, and a Democratic grouping. Germany endeavoured in the second half of 1936 to convince the world that there were only the alternatives, Communism and opposition to Communism. '*Tertium non datur* — a third solution was non-existent,' argued the Germans. In the beginning this anti-Communist crusade was quite popular, especially in some of the Central-European countries. The Vatican, apparently under Jesuit influence, was inclined to accept the theory that Communism was a greater enemy of the Roman Catholic Church than National Socialism, because the Nazi ideology was probably only a temporary apparition, while Communism was a fundamental enemy of the Church. Catholic countries, such as Austria, therefore showed an inclination to participate in this anti-Communist crusade. Hungary, whose rulers have sworn never to let Bolshevism return to Hungarian soil, was also a ready supporter of the German idea. In Yugoslavia, the Minister of the Interior, the Slovene Catholic leader (himself a priest), Father Anton Korosec, was a determined enemy of Communism; and he saw a continuously rising Communist danger in Yugoslavia, though such a danger was non-existent.

It is easy to stamp as a Communist everybody who wants a more democratic régime! Father Korosec, therefore, had little difficulty in convincing Prince Regent Paul (who always hated Bolshevik Russia because he believed that Tsarism had paid with its life for the creation of a powerful Serbia) and Premier Stoyadinovitch that Communism was threatening the Kingdom; but the ultimate result was probably not quite to Korosec's liking, because his Communist scare has driven Yugoslavia increasingly into the arms of Germany. In Rumania the Iron Guard organization as well as the Christian-National Parties have all approved a more pro-German and anti-Communist policy, and even the King has been affected somewhat by it. In any event the Communist scare was a good excuse to get rid of Rumania's great Titulescu, who always advocated a complete reconciliation with Soviet Russia.

Thanks to Great Britain's attitude toward the Spanish civil war, this first passionate anti-Communist wave began to recede early in 1937; and with the birth of non-intervention a distinct threefold grouping became evident. On the Left stood Soviet Russia and on the Right Germany, Italy, and Portugal; while the United States, Great Britain, and France constituted the core of a group which rejected the false thesis that the world has no choice but to accept one of two mad-dog political systems as a basis of government. This caused some misgivings in Moscow; but Germany's efforts to break the Franco-Russian treaty remained futile, although on important ideological issues Moscow was unable to drag even a French Left Government to her side. What will happen in case of more serious developments, especially if France at such a time is ruled by a reactionary Government; and what is Great Britain up to? Such is the burden of Litvinoff's thoughts!

Germany did not succeed in disturbing the Franco-Russian alliance system, but did succeed in spreading the seeds of distrust amongst the partners. France naturally will stick to the Franco-Soviet pact, and even a Government of the Right in France can do nothing but look to Moscow as a potential ally, just as in pre-war days. Nevertheless, a slight misapprehension has been left behind in the minds of the Muscovites.

Moreover, many augurs in Central Europe see potential changes occurring in Soviet Russia. What were those trials of Radek, Piatakov, Sokolnikoff, Serebrjakoff, and the other Communist leaders in January, 1937? What was the meaning of the fall of Jagoda, the once mighty chief of the G.P.U.? They were accused of high treason, of espionage in the interest of Germany and Japan, of sabotage, of preparing terroristic acts, and of a number of other crimes. Many of Lenin's most faithful servants were placed before firing squads or sentenced to terms of long imprisonment.

The answer of Leon Trotzky was a series of counter-charges against Stalin. But it was obvious already in 1927, when Trotzky was expelled from the Communist Party, that Josef Stalin was thinking of liquidating the somewhat too ambitious aim of the Communists, namely, the fomenting of a World Revolution. The Orthodox Communists, headed by Trotzky, held that only the success of a World Revolution could establish the success of Communism, and that Communism in a single country was impossible. Josef Stalin,

the more practical-minded and less doctrinaire Georgian, decided that he could wangle Communism in a huge country with such immense resources as Russia, without worrying too much about 'Communism in our time' in other parts of the world.

Concerning Stalin, Trotzky has invented this biting joke: It was summer time and all the People's Commissars were on holidays. Some had gone to the Crimea to bathe and swim, others to their homes. Stalin went to his native Georgia. As in days of yore, the mighty Secretary of the Communist Party stretched himself full-length on the hillside and watched the gregarious sheep grazing on the green pasture. And he was singing a song, the chorus of which consisted only of a few words: 'Communism in a single country, Communism in a single country . . .' Following a thunderclap and lightning a life-sized figure of Karl Marx appeared amidst the clouds and shouted in a stentorian voice: 'What are you singing, you idiot?' To which Stalin, in his soft, convincing voice, answered: 'It does not matter what I sing. I am singing, after all, only to sheep . . .'

Ten years ago Stalin had already realized that the World Revolution could be created only after a general conflagration, and that pending such a conflagration he should be content to establish a Communist or Socialist economic system in one country alone. By 1936, Stalin had found the Communists who still dreamt of World Revolution and of the Bolshevization of the other countries a liability which was not worth being carried unless one was determined to risk a war. The various trials of Communist ex-leaders undoubtedly purposed the liquidation of this revolutionary movement beyond the boundaries of Soviet Russia. But if the world-wide revolutionary movement is to be abandoned, what is the Russian system? In Central Europe many people believe that the natural development must be a kind of National Socialism — Russian Nationalist, but truly Socialistic, probably a National Socialism such as Gregor Strasser once contemplated developing in Germany.

Such a possibility brings to mind yet more challenging questions: If Russia, in a decade or so, or perhaps much earlier, reaches a stage of National Socialism, will there not be a natural inclination of the two powerful régimes of similar constitution in Germany and Russia to co-operate?

Today the section of Nazi opinion influenced by Alfred Rosenberg is very powerful, and Adolf Hitler is filled with hatred for the

Bolshevik régime in Russia. As long as this section of the Party predominates, the policy of Germany obviously will be to immobilize the West; that is, to continue to construct strong fortifications in the Rhineland as a defence against the Western Powers, while at the same time concentrating the whole offensive against Russia, in the hope that Central and Southeastern Europe will be either on Germany's side or will remain neutral in this struggle. Czechoslovakia's mutual defence pact with Russia is naturally a thorn in Germany's flesh. For this reason all German efforts during the last two years have been directed partly toward the isolation of Czechoslovakia and partly toward her disintegration.

But though the section of the Nazi Party which wishes such a development is extremely powerful, it is not all-powerful. Thus they failed to achieve success with their December, 1936, plan for an armed attack on Czechoslovakia on the Spanish pattern. With the support of the dissatisfied Hungarian and German minorities, the revolution was to be fomented from within. Then German storm troops, in disguise, were to be rushed to their help. The *Reichswehr* intervened, however, and persuaded Hitler to frustrate this action, for, as we have already seen, it has long hoped that Russia may become Germany's partner in peace and in war.

In the days when Germany was trying to liberate herself from her worst fetters at the conference of Genoa in 1922, great surprise was caused when suddenly the conclusion of the Rapallo Treaty re-establishing diplomatic relations between Germany and Russia was announced, signed by Tchitcherin (who died an outcast) and Rathenau (who died from Nazi bullets). Soon afterwards the *Reichswehr*, under the influence of General von Seeckt, was ordering its secret rearmament requisites in Russia. The most important people in the German General Staff still follow Bismarckian precepts and believe in the possibility of a military co-operation between Russia and Germany. Naturally, as long as Adolf Hitler is the master of Germany, or at least until he has reversed his policy, this idea of the army is hardly realizable. But it would be a mistake to dismiss it as impossible.

For ideological reasons it is just as hard for Stalin to abandon his anti-German policy as it is for Hitler to change his anti-Russian platform. But Stalin has already done a great deal to eliminate men and things which were the chief stumbling-block in the eyes

of the German fanatics. Trotzky and the world-revolutionists are in exile or shot; the Jews have been ousted from most of the Government positions. Moscow's Bolshevism is becoming decidedly less international and more national. Nevertheless, it is impossible to liquidate everything that has happened during the last years.

The Russian army has changed. As the Spanish war revealed, it is one of the best-equipped and best-trained of armies, and it has the largest air force in the world. Marshal Woroshiloff, the People's Commissar for War, has long been known for his pro-French sentiments. But his former Assistant, People's Commissar Marshal Tuchatchevsky, was known to have a certain admiration for the German military machine. This ambitious soldier, whom the Russians liked to describe as the 'Red Napoleon,' fell into disgrace in March, 1937, apparently in connection with the accusations raised against his friend, General Putna, the former Russian Military Attaché in London; and by May, 1937, he had been deposed and first given a nominal command in the Don basin, then executed in June. His successor, A. J. Jegoroff, one of the rivals of Tuchatchevsky and a trusted man of Stalin, even when Chief-of-Staff, used to show great admiration for Germany, and he is said to be in favour of a friendship with Hitler's Third Reich. On the other hand, Jegoroff is understood to be an unconditional friend of Stalin, and will probably do nothing except what Stalin deems to be the right policy.

All this makes Central Europe somewhat nervous. The Rome-Berlin axis was bad enough, in that it tended to bring the small countries into an extremely difficult situation. Poor Austria has suffered the tortures of a combined Italo-German pressure, but neither she nor the other small states dare openly to raise a voice against this combination. Everybody realizes, however, that even if the Rome-Berlin axis does work for some time, it cannot be a sufficient support for the German army. Italy is a poor country, lacking all the raw materials that Germany needs. And the supplies from the Balkans in war days are by no means so safe. What if the two major dictatorial Powers, Germany and Russia, make up their feud?

Many augurs, with the safe instinct of illogical people, see the spectre of this German-Russian friendship looming on the horizon. For this reason Italy refrained from committing herself too much against Russia in her deal with Germany; she did not want to shut



the door to a possible co-operation with Russia later on. The strong one, Germany, will be forgiven, because one always forgives the strong; but what about the weak?

Russia and her mortal enemy Austria made up a bitter feud in 1903. When it appeared that only war could settle the differences between Vienna and Moscow, the Tsar of Russia and the Emperor of Austria met in Muerzsteg, in a small hunting lodge of Emperor Francis Josef; and there was signed the famous agreement which divided the spheres of interests of the two empires in Central and Southeastern Europe. Austria was to continue her penetration in the Western Balkans, Russia in the eastern parts of that peninsula. But in 1908 a serious crisis arose between the two at the time of the annexation of Bosnia, and six years later the Great War ended the agreement and the emperors.

Germany and Italy have divided their spheres of interest just as badly as did Russia and Austria. For this reason the Rome-Berlin axis can have little claim to permanence. The Berlin-Moscow axis, if it ever comes, can also establish only a makeshift arrangement. If the two big dictatorships decide to divide their spheres of interests (should they ever conclude peace with each other), then the arrangement probably will be similar to the Muerzsteg agreement. Austria and Hungary and the Western Balkans, including Yugoslavia and Greece, probably will come under German influence, while Russia will get the Eastern Balkans, including Constantinople. But just as Austria and Russia could not agree about Bosnia, so Russia and Germany are bound to clash about the Bosphorus.

This, however, is all music of the future. It is recorded merely to show that the small countries of Central and Southeastern Europe, and even such a big country as Italy, must watch developments with some anxiety. Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism are real forces if they are ever let loose; the Italian dream of the resuscitation of the Roman Empire may be a dangerous dream, but, after all, only a dream . . .

Whether the spectre which looms on the horizon will become a reality depends on many factors. Can Hitler change so suddenly as to permit such a policy? Or can Stalin overcome his distrust of the Third Reich? Or is anybody else whose figure looms behind the scenes going to force the change? One never can tell in advance . . .

A few days after Archduke Francis Ferdinand had been murdered

at Sarajevo, while many people were still doubting that Russia, after the experiences of the Russo-Japanese War, would dare to intervene, a prominent old Austrian parliamentarian discussed the general outlook with the mighty Austrian Prime Minister, Count von Stuerghk. The member of the old Reichsrat held that Russia would not be able to intervene because of the danger of an outbreak of a revolution at home. The cynical Count von Stuerghk replied: 'And who shall make this revolution in Russia? Perhaps Herr Bronstein from the Café Central?'

Count von Stuerghk, who was murdered during the war by the Socialist Friedrich Adler, did not live long enough to see that same Herr Bronstein from the Café Central in Vienna — better known later as Leon Davidovitch Trotzky — together with his friend, Uljanoff-Lenin — overthrow the power of the Tsars and establish a Bolshevik Republic in Russia.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE GREAT ENIGMA: ANSCHLUSS OR DANUBIA?

DEAR reader, we are now approaching 'Journey's End.'

I have led you through the intricate maze of troubles, intrigues, ambitions, and conflicts, and all the paraphernalia that appertains to this lunatic asylum called Central-Europe. Lunatic asylum, and yet a pleasant one. For despite all the dangers to which she is exposed, Central Europe refuses to be frightened. In France, in Great Britain, in the United States, persons who matter watch uneasily the news coming from these parts, believing that some day, when they open the newspapers with their morning coffee, they will read of some really big disaster in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, or the Balkans. But while the saner part of the world is fidgety and anxious about these parts, the statesmen of Central Europe keep their blood cool. Doctor von Schuschnigg, despite all his difficulties, refuses to be perturbed; Doctor Benes, the great President of a small Republic, has been an optimist for the last four years. The Polish Foreign Minister, Colonel Joseph Beck, declared the other day that people talk about a crisis in Central Europe. But if a crisis takes the form of permanence, then it is no longer a crisis. It is a period, a condition of life . . .

'Are we dancing on a volcano? If this is a volcano, let's dance on it . . .' As I write this concluding chapter, the trees in Vienna are green, the Viennese and their summer visitors are busily visiting *cabarets* and *Heurige* to drink the sour dry wine that grows on the hills round Vienna and to get jolly on it. They love, they live, they enjoy themselves while the music of the soft Grinzing violins fills the air: '*Wien, Wien, nur Du allein, sollst stets die Stadt meiner Tracume sein.*' (Vienna, Vienna, thou and thou alone shall ever be the city of my dreams.)

In London and New York many people are asking nervously:

Where is Hitler's next blow going to fall: will he next raid Austria or Czechoslovakia?

But in Vienna? Sitting with his best girl in the wine-garden, the Austrian turns to the popular singer and asks him to sing: '*Da hab'st mei letstes Krand'l, heut is ma alles ans . . .*' (There you have my last crown today, it's all the same to me.) And so Vienna has lived for centuries, and centuries, the same old indomitable atmosphere of gaiety, jollity, and carelessness. After his journey to Vienna in 1438 — that is five hundred years ago — Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who later on became Pope Pius II, wrote: 'When you visit a burgher, you think you are entering the house of a Prince.'

One of the popular figures of Vienna is the 'lieber Augustin,' a symbol of the indestructible spirit of gaiety and *joie-de-vivre* of the Viennese. The 'lieber Augustin' was a popular singer who went from inn to inn with his bagpipe. In the year 1679 the plague was killing the population of this city by the thousands. Augustin refused to be sad even under this terrible danger. Though the bodies of the victims of the plague filled one mighty ditch and grave after the other, Augustin continued his bagpipe playing and his clever songs. One of his favourite tunes was the song:

*'O du lieber Augustin, Augustin,  
Alles ist hin!  
Geld ist hin, Gut ist hin,  
Alles hin, Augustin!'*

(O thou dear Augustin,  
Everything is lost!  
Money is lost, estate gone,  
Everything gone, Augustin.)

According to a Vienna chronicler, Augustin drank too much wine in an inn and on his way home he suddenly fell asleep on the roadside. The attendants who were entrusted by the city to go round and carry to the plague ditch the bodies of the victims of the pestilence took him for dead and threw him into the ditch. Here he lay amongst the bodies of the plague victims all night. He survived the terrible night without any damage and died twenty-six years afterward. The Vienna Municipality erected a statue to the memory of this indomitable representative of Vienna's power to survive; and tourists still can see this strange memorial at the corner of the Kellermannsgasse

and Neustiftgasse near the Saint Ulrich Church, the place where Augustin's miraculous plague-resisting sleep took place.

'Can a city with such a spirit go under?'

The grey stone buildings of this magnificent city have seen many vicissitudes. There is a spirit of permanence, of conservatism, of tradition in Vienna. When on March 5, 1933, the National-Socialist Party in Germany succeeded in obtaining an overwhelming majority at the last real elections in the Reich, it looked as if the death-knell of Austria had sounded. But on that day the Catholic Clerical organ, the *Reichpost*, had a leading article, the sense of which was: The first German Empire (the Holy Roman Empire which was, after all, most of the time under Vienna's domination) lasted a thousand years; the Second German Empire lasted forty-seven years . . . how long will the Third Reich last? To foreigners who enjoy the hospitality of this beautiful city this overconfidence appears to border on unseemly conceit; it is almost blasphemous; but the Austrian trusts himself and his indomitable nature. The only danger appears to be that Austria's great rival is also ruled by an Austrian! It is not accidental that such a highly disciplined nation as the German had to choose an Austrian as her leader in the most important phase of her contemporary history.

Will Austria survive this strain? It is difficult for the augurs to foretell. Unknown and incalculable factors are struggling for supremacy. Is Germany going to absorb Austria? Is Czechoslovakia to be broken up under German-Polish-Hungarian pressure? Undoubtedly Czechoslovakia and Austria mean pivot positions for Germany in Central Europe. If she has the one, she has the other, and if she has both, then the door is opened to the Orient. The Second Empire began to dream of the Berlin-Bagdad route, the Third Reich has continued the same dream. . . .

Bismarck once said: 'Bohemia is the navel of Europe.' The possessors of power in Berlin know that Bohemia is still the navel of Europe. Once in possession of Bohemia, the road is open for them toward the southeast. But Czechoslovakia is by no means an easy problem for them. A direct war on her is dangerous, because no one can calculate what repercussions it may create. In any event, Czechoslovakia has mutual assistance pacts with both Soviet Russia and France. Although many Nazis believe that France will not hurry to the aid of Czechoslovakia, or that Soviet Russia can come to her

help only by violating the territories of Poland or Rumania, still the intervention of those two Powers must be reckoned with. Perhaps the Little Entente friends of Czechoslovakia will continue to refuse to sign a mutual assistance pact within a French-Little Entente system of defensive alliances, as they did at the Belgrade Conference of the Little Entente in April, 1937. As long as the European general position is unsettled and uncertain, and the small States cannot foretell which way the chances of the balance will go, they are reluctant to offend powerful Germany or boasting Italy, and they do not want to be open partners in an alliance or mutual assistance system which may bring on them the wrath of Germany and the anger of Italy. But if an attack is delivered against Czechoslovakia, and France, as is foreseen in the alliance, should hurry to her aid, it is almost certain that, despite all their reserve, Yugoslavia and Rumania would also come into the fight on the side of their ally. The small States realize that the fate of their unfortunate ally would be their fate some years or decades later.

A German attack on Czechoslovakia, therefore, is difficult in the face of the possible intervention of France and Soviet Russia. It is true that with the passing years the fortifications of the Rhineland will create a change because Germany's western frontier then will be invulnerable, and while Germany could throw her legions against Bohemia, French armies would assail in vain the Chinese wall of Rhineland fortifications. This state of affairs, however, has not yet been reached. Many people believe that the methods used in Spain to foment a civil war may be repeated by Germany in Czechoslovakia. This, however, becomes daily a more difficult affair. The defences of Czechoslovakia are being completed rapidly; the frontier guards and frontier fortifications have improved, the preparedness of the frontier service makes a precipitate raid almost impossible. A rush of large groups of men in motor-cars and lorries has become impossible through the construction of winding turn-pin roads, surrounded by concrete fortifications at the frontier. Moreover, the Sudeten-German population, while one of the toughest oppositions, is just as little revolutionary as the Croatian.

As a direct assault on Czechoslovakia, should it be by making a march into the country, or by fomenting civil war, appears to be difficult or almost impossible, because it threatens to lead to international complications, there remains one method for Germany,

namely, to attempt the encirclement of Czechoslovakia. This constant employment of the pincers on a weak country, it is believed, may, under certain circumstances, become fatal. As Czechoslovakia has her own defensive army and probably can count on foreign support, she must be left alone, and thus the next on the list of the Germans appears to be Austria.

It has long been believed that the sheer weight of the German onslaught of the last four years will ultimately force Austria to capitulate. With about one-third of her population more or less supporting the Nazi platform, and probably an even greater proportion standing theoretically on the basis of the union of the two countries (even if the present régime in Germany does not appeal to them), the Government's position has been by no means easy.

After destroying the *Heimwehr* faction within his own Fatherland Front, it was obvious that Schuschnigg had to seek some means to enlarge the basis of his support. The inclusion of Nazis into the Government was out of the question. To win over the Pan-German section of the dissatisfied masses was also difficult. After the destruction of the Social Democratic Party in February, 1934, the important section of the population which sympathized with them became opposed to the régime, although not necessarily in activist forms. The Social Democrats realize that open opposition to the Schuschnigg régime would only play into the hands of Germany, and for this reason, while maintaining complete aloofness and disapproval, they have not adopted measures of open opposition.

Furthermore, Schuschnigg, declared Monarchist and the son of an Imperial general, feels a sort of disgust for the proletariat. And though it is officially denied, many signs show that he promised Germany in July, 1936, at least a moderate support of the anti-Communist Front; and certainly any inclusion of the Socialists into the Fatherland Front would be regarded by Germany as a breach of this agreement.

Under these circumstances, there was only one thing for Schuschnigg to do: to create an activist movement within the ranks of the Fatherland Front. But when he encouraged the Legitimists, as we have seen, Germany was offended; and Mussolini, eager to preserve the Berlin-Rome axis, allowed Gayda to denounce restoration in Austria. And then it was that Schuschnigg came round to the Socialist thesis that the *Anschluss* and restoration were not the only solutions for Austria.

Under all these circumstances, it was obvious that the day-by-day fight for Austrian independence would become increasingly difficult. Assailed for years by illegal propaganda, and now by the even more dangerous legal propaganda which can permeate Austria under the disguise of the 'cultural exchange agreement,' Austria's position seemed to be hopeless. But in an article written for the Christmas number of a leading Vienna daily, Schuschnigg developed his truly Austrian faith:

We should not be real Austrians if we were not certain about things such as political and economic miracles. And yet, in these last few years, we have become accustomed to hear about the *Oesterreichisches Wunder*. This is a miracle in which we must believe because we can all see it with our very eyes. Something has come true which seemed utterly impossible some years ago. The drifting, aimless country of post-war years has become a State, and many other nations recognize its political and economic stability.

This Austrian miracle is due, of course, not only to the stamina and the wonderful power of resistance of the Austrians, but also to the foreign political situation of this country. The fact that Germany needed Italy and Italy required Germany in the international chess game brought about the agreement of July 11, 1936. For many years Italy's support seemed to be the guaranty of Austria's independence. All the world, knowing the weakness of the internal situation, believed that this international prop was absolutely necessary to maintain Austria's place in this orbit as an independent country. All the greater, therefore, was the consternation of the Western world when, after the Venice meeting of April, 1937, Signor Gayda revealed that the inclusion of the Nazis into the Fatherland Front and later into the Government had been decided upon. The fright was great and, by the superficial signs, justified. Gayda had never written a word which could have brought the anger of the Duce upon him. But this time Count Ciano had permitted the excursion of Gayda's pen which frightened the world.

It seemed as if Italy were prepared to abandon Austria to Germany, and it was suspected that a high price (probably further assistance in Spain) had been promised for it. Yet as long as at least a halfway responsible man conducts the fate of Italy, such a deal is impossible. Those who know the situation realize that Aus-



tria is situated at the junction of German and Italian expansionist ambitions. Italy and Germany have tried, ever since Ciano's visit to Berlin in October, 1936, to emphasize the almost alliance-like character of the Rome-Berlin axis; but this alliance is, in reality, a disguised rivalry. It can be compared almost with a former alliance of Italy, that with Austria in pre-war days. Undoubtedly, the arrangement made between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Italian Kingdom amounted to a nominal alliance; and yet, when it came to a real decision, Italy fought on the side of a grouping which was opposed to Austria. Germany and Italy try to hide their latent rivalries in the present-day Austria, in the same spirit as did Austria and Italy in the days when they had conflicting interests on the right shore of the Adriatic and in the Western Balkans. Since both countries coveted Albania, and yet did not wish to fight it out, they effected a compromise. But in the Great War Italy was on the side of the Allied and Associated Powers, while Austria stuck to the old alliance of the Central Powers.

As long as Germany and Italy require each other, Austria's independence seems to be assured. But how long will the two Fascist Powers need each other? Nobody can answer this question. And what thereafter will the future hold in store for Austria? Perhaps her statesmen, who believe that she has passed the better part of her 'Via Dolorosa,' the road of her major crisis and danger, are right! Except for 1934, the period from April until November, 1936, seemed to be the most dangerous in her existence as an independent State. Germany's power was in the ascendancy; Italy was becoming relatively weak and more and more dependent on Germany's friendship; France seemed to lie prostrate and showed all signs of internal and external weakness; thanks to German propaganda in Central Europe, the impression was created that she was on the verge of Bolshevization. The apparent weakness of Great Britain, which had been caught napping in the greatest armament race ever witnessed, had only helped to increase the relative strength of Germany. The whole of the European Continent was filled with fear, and in their trembling helplessness all countries south of Hitler now were forced to make gestures to Germany. It seemed that Schacht's economic campaign in the Southeast of Europe was now bringing the whole of the Balkans within the sphere of interest of Germany. Yugoslavia, Rumania, Greece, Bulgaria, Hungary, and

Poland were making gestures which were interpreted as being pro-German. It was thought that all this had shaken life out of the Little Entente. Austria was hanging in the air, dependent on the benevolence of an Italy which was partly exhausted after her Abyssinian effort, partly engaged in a serious conflict with Great Britain about the Mediterranean, and on the top of all that, apparently feeling morally obliged to Germany for help given her during the Abyssinian crisis. Czechoslovakia was in an even worse position, for she lacked even the support of Italy which at least Austria thought she enjoyed. Surrounded by a hostile Germany, Poland, and Hungary, Czechoslovakia appeared to be caught between the levers of a powerful nut-cracker.

Almost overnight, the situation changed. Suddenly Europe awoke from a bad dream. It became clear that France was by no means weakened or incapacitated by her Socialist régime—though, of course, she was undergoing an important but silent social revolution—and that she maintained (with the exception of Russia who was her ally) the strongest army in Europe. The announcement of the British rearmament programme filled the despondent small countries with a new hope.

Moreover, the Rome-Berlin axis had produced a result quite different from the one its makers expected. While the creators of the axis hoped that their apparent military strength would force the whole of Central and Southeastern Europe to revolve round the Rome-Berlin axis, the fact that the two Fascist Powers openly showed their aim to enslave the small and the weak States brought revolt and opposition. And thus the Central European 'miracle' became evident. For eighteen years these small countries had been fighting each other in nonsensical and exhausting rivalries. This rivalry had first taken the form of dividing the small States into a group of the 'haves' and 'have nots,' the *status quo* States and the States with revisionist aims. These rivalries had created the Little Entente and the Rome Protocol groups. This, in turn, was a mirage of the existing Franco-Italian rivalry in these parts. This period, which lasted until almost four years ago, was followed by the comparatively short period of Germano-Italian rivalry. The result was the German push to the Balkans, followed by Nazi Germany's effort to divide Europe into an anti-Communist and a Communist Front. Czechoslovakia was nominated to the honorary Bolshevik's

rôle, though the régime in Prague was as little communistic as that of London or Washington. At this juncture the small countries realized: 'If we continue our quarrel, we shall fall prey to the two Fascist dictators.' And quite suddenly, probably frightened by the pincers of the Rome-Berlin nut-cracker, and encouraged clandestinely by Great Britain's growing strength, these countries said: 'We do not want to be enrolled either in a Bolshevik or anti-Bolshevik front. We want to be independent; we wish to be let alone. We intend to take an active part in any settlement which shall follow, and most emphatically we refuse to be the passive objects of such a settlement.'

The two Fascist Great Powers had a further mishap: the Spanish civil war in the first months of 1937 certainly did not go the way which was wished by Italy and also by Germany. While in November, 1936, it had looked as if Madrid would be captured by Franco's Nationalist troops, the outskirts of the Spanish capital proved to be the largest suburb of any metropolis: Franco's troops walked in it for months and months and yet were unable to reach the other end, the German joke ran. Then followed the defeat of the Italian 'volunteers' on the Guadalajara front, which confirmed the suspicion entertained in many parts of the world, that even the strictest Fascist discipline cannot change fundamentally the basic characteristics of a nation.

Whether or not the judgment formed as a consequence of the Guadalajara front was justified, it certainly damaged Italy's prestige, and now Italy was openly considered as a Power playing second fiddle to Germany. If we add that the German army leaders were always somewhat sceptical about the military value of the Italian aid, this reverse in Spain did not help to increase Italy's reputation with the German General Staff, though under the weight of political considerations undoubtedly the German-Italian axis policy was being continued.

Thus the world was confronted with a new situation at the beginning of 1937, and more especially toward the late spring: There was on the one side the co-operation of the Western Powers, in which concert Great Britain and France could be considered as allies as far as Western European questions were concerned, and one could notice the increasing friendship between Great Britain and the United States, while the ties between France and Soviet Russia were

by no means broken despite the disappointment felt in Moscow by the hesitating policy of France. Against this Franco British grouping, the counterpoise was the Rome-Berlin axis. And the small countries were situated between or next the two axes. The Scandinavian countries were constantly drawing nearer to Great Britain (and thus to France), and so did Belgium, Holland, and even some of the Baltic States. Poland was also seeking to increase her friendship with Great Britain, while Turkey's relations with England were perfect. Yugoslavia was connected with Britain by the deep pro-British sympathies of both Prince-Regent Paul and Premier Stoyadinovitch; Greece, while extremely pro-German through her dictator, the Potsdam-educated General Metaxas, was still closely connected to Britain by the relation of King George II to the royal family and the pro-British sympathies gained by George during his exile.

Germany, again, received a definitive blow through the death in Hungary of Goemboes, the father of the idea of the Rome-Berlin axis, who died in October, 1936, just when it seemed that his dream had started to take a definite form and was on the way to become a reality. But then his successor, Koloman von Darányi, was less convinced that Hungary's happiness was to be sought in being a strong semi-vassal State of Germany.

Under these circumstances in the second part of 1937 it appeared that the solutions, 'Anschluss or Danubia,' had a fairly equal chance, though Danubia was probably the favourite. The Powers were so nearly balanced that it was believed that Germany would not assail Austria in a hurry. That Hitler wanted Austria, everybody knew. But the forces against him seemed to be too strong. Yet naturally one had to fear that Austria might succumb to such an accident as often has changed the course of history. And if Austria were to go, it was clear that Czechoslovakia would have to go, too. And it was also obvious that if either of these pivots went, then the way was open to Germany to the Southeast. After all, Professor Naumann's Mitteleuropa had to consider the existence of a friendly and allied Austro-Hungarian Monarchy; now that the Habsburg Empire was defunct, this obstacle also was out of the way.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### AUSTRIA MEETS THE FATE OF ABYSSINIA

INDEED, one can slip on a banana-peel and break one's neck. That was what Austria did. Her banana-peel was called Berchtesgaden . . .

Sitting in the armchair of the neutral observer, one could review the world with comparative peace of mind at the end of 1937. And then, suddenly, the situation changed almost overnight. The root of this change goes back, in reality, to the middle of 1937 when Italo-English relations became increasingly bad, and when, probably influenced by the Mediterranean tension, a section of the British public opinion counselled better understanding with Germany. Lord Halifax, at that time Lord Privy Seal, had visited Germany in the capacity of Master of Foxhounds of his English hunt, and ever since that visit rumours never ceased to maintain that he consented to a German policy of expansion in Central Europe. There was, indeed, always a small but influential group in Great Britain pleading in favour of a free hand for Germany in Central Europe.

Their argument was: If a dissatisfied Germany continues to sulk, then the Third Reich may cast an eye on British possessions overseas. Yet Herr Hitler emphasized in his book *My Struggle* that he was not too keen on overseas colonies — what he wanted was *Lebensraum* (room to live) for his Germans and this he thought to obtain partly in Central and Southeastern Europe, and, at a later date, in the Ukrainian parts of Soviet Russia.

Subsequent events seem to prove that Lord Halifax must have promised, at least vaguely, a free hand to Herr Hitler in Central Europe. Or his answers must have been so vague that Herr Hitler took them as consent. There was probably another idea behind those heads which concocted the plan of renewed German pressure on Central Europe. Such pressure, they thought, might force Signor Mussolini to disengage himself from his various Mediterranean en-

terprises and to devote increased attention once more to Central Europe.

Italy's position in Central Europe by the end of 1937 was far from enviable. She was bound to grow increasingly fidgety in the face of Germany's rapidly increasing power. In 1934 it was easy to mobilize the Italian army on the Brenner; in 1938 such a mobilization would have spelled defeat, if Italy were left to deal singlehanded with bullying Germany. Mussolini, to extricate himself from the Abyssinian mess, had to increase his commitments in the various parts of the Mediterranean. Thus, besides keeping a huge army of occupation in Abyssinia, Italy had a large army in Spain, and an even larger one in Libya. All this immobilized half a million soldiers of the Italian army scattered all over the various parts of the Mediterranean. Germany, on the other hand, took great care to make no military commitments far away from the homeland.

Hitler apparently realized that the period of high-handed escapades was slowly nearing its end, and he also figured that, sooner or later, Italy must become once more a partner in a Stresa-like front, notwithstanding her obligations arising out of her policy of the Rome-Berlin axis. But, for the time being, Anglo-Italian relations were still too strained, and Hitler wished to use this period to make a *tabula rasa* in Austria.

The National Socialist Party in Germany thereupon decided to step into action. The Austrian Nazi leader, Doctor Leopold Tavs, engineered a *putsch* plan, by which *agents provocateurs* were to make an attempt on the German Embassy in Vienna which would give the German army a pretext for bringing pressure on Austria. But when the plot was discovered and exposed by the Vienna police, it was clear that this indirect method was doomed. Herr Hitler was enraged, but at this juncture Herr von Papen, who had just been recalled from his post as ambassador to Vienna, hurried to Berchtesgaden and brought the second olive branch to the Fuehrer.

Herr von Papen arrived in Berchtesgaden on February 6, 1938, and proposed to the Fuehrer that he invite Doctor von Schuschnigg to the Obersalzberg (Herr Hitler's country residence). When, on February 9, Herr von Papen had presented Herr Hitler's invitation to Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor did not know what to do. In the old days, he would have consulted Mussolini, but now, since the Venice meetings of the Duce and Schuschnigg in April, 1937, re-

lations between the two former friends were somewhat strained. Herr von Papen from the start warned Schuschnigg not to consult Britain or France. After all, it was a matter of life and death for the two German countries and the questions to be discussed were of no concern for third partners. Von Schuschnigg received certain guarantees that some painful questions would not be raised in Berchtesgaden.

On the tenth of February, von Schuschnigg accepted the invitation. He kept secrecy, but a subordinate official apparently informed the Italians the same day. Mussolini was certainly surprised to learn the news. On the basis of the Rome-Berlin axis arrangement, Hitler should have informed Mussolini about this invitation. But von Papen cunningly argued: This invitation was originally suggested by Mussolini in Berlin in October, 1937, and since the visit of von Schuschnigg was going to take place on the strength of this recommendation, it was unnecessary to consult the Duce. Signor Mussolini immediately sensed that all was not well, and the very same day he sent a telegram to Signor Grandi which two days later was shown under mysterious circumstances to Premier Chamberlain. This famous wire to Grandi was the impetus for the Italo-British negotiations which were to follow.

But it was too late! Owing to their complicated nature the Anglo-Italian conversations could not proceed at a speed which would have saved Austria.

In Berchtesgaden Chancellor von Schuschnigg got a rough handling, and during the eleven hours of negotiations on February 12 the Fuehrer could always point to the fact that the German army was standing on the Austrian frontier, ready to march if Schuschnigg refused to comply with the conditions demanded of him. One of the German conditions was the granting of equality to the Austrian National Socialists within the Fatherland Front; but the demand which Schuschnigg most stubbornly resisted was that Doctor Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the political commissar for the inclusion of Nazis in the Fatherland Front, should become Minister of the Interior and Public Security. Von Schuschnigg immediately realized the significance of this demand: not only would it have handed over the police to the National Socialists, but also behind this appointment hid the Trojan horse: Seyss-Inquart was to prepare for Hitler a plebiscite which in three to six months' time would bring Austria into his lap!

Von Schuschnigg tried to argue that only the President of the Austrian Federal State, Herr Wilhelm Miklas, could dismiss or appoint a Minister, whereupon Hitler granted him two days to carry through this change in the Government. Miklas, indeed, resisted. He was willing to give the Home Office to Doctor Seyss-Inquart, or even the Ministry of Justice, but not the police! When this hesitation continued, on Tuesday afternoon, February 15, the German army in Bavaria received orders to move to the Austrian border, and under this 'gentle' pressure Schuschnigg accepted Doctor Seyss-Inquart as his new Minister of the Interior and Public Security.

Deep depression came upon the followers of Doctor von Schuschnigg when they learned about these events. 'Why did he go into the lion's mouth? Why did he accept Hitler's invitation?' asked most of these friends. Why? Because von Papen told him that a refusal would place on him the guilt of refusing to consider a 'generous' offer of reconciliation between the two German States. Moreover, in the old days he had friends whom he could consult; now he felt lonely and deserted. And furthermore, his deep faith which had given him courage to fight National Socialism in former years was no longer as firm as before. When von Schuschnigg took over power in 1934, he constantly received threatening letters, and his wife, Herma von Schuschnigg, begged him to resign and to retire into private life.

The story is that in the early months of 1935 von Schuschnigg was almost yielding to the pleas of his wife, when on June 13, an automobile accident caused her death while he escaped uninjured. (Only his hair turned grey overnight.) In this terrible catastrophe he saw a sign of Providence, and he was convinced that the Lord took away his wife so that he might better serve the cause of the Faith. Then about a year ago Countess Vera Fugger came into his life, and from that time on his days were no longer devoted solely to duty. . . . Many people believe that von Schuschnigg's love for this beautiful aristocratic woman was responsible for the weakness shown in Berchtesgaden and thereafter.

If the followers of von Schuschnigg were seized by depression, the Nazis in the provinces were jubilant. When I visited Graz and Linz after the appointment of Seyss-Inquart, I realized that the dynamics of the Nazi movement might prove too forceful, unless a dam were placed in its way.

Von Schuschnigg's speech on February 24 had once more electrified



his followers. It was a good oration, but it contained certain points which were bound to annoy Hitler. It was a fighting speech, a provocative speech. And Adolf Hitler never pockets insults. Moreover, the speech was delivered too late to serve as an effective dam to Nazi jubilation in the provinces.

Then von Schuschnigg delivered his last coup: On March 9 he ordered a plebiscite to be held on March 13. He knew that Seyss-Inquart's chief duty was to prepare such a plebiscite for Hitler; he now wanted to forestall this, and arrange a referendum at a time when he knew that the votes would go in favour of an independent Austria. He had contemplated this plebiscite ever since Berchtesgaden, but he could not announce it before because first he had to gain the workers over to his side. When this was achieved, he knew that at least sixty-five per cent of the votes (but probably more) would be cast in favour of an independent Austria.

And Herr Hitler realized this fully. After Berchtesgaden, Austria, his dream, his home country, seemed to be within reach of his hands ... only a few weeks, and it would be his. He told von Papen after Berchtesgaden:

'You know, Berchtesgaden was *my* Abyssinia! All that I have to do now is to get it recognized!'

And when he thought that he had his dreamland within his reach, it started to slide away from him. Obviously, he was not willing to yield. But the decision was ripening in him only slowly.

For two days the Austrian Nazis were without instructions, but even on Thursday, March 10, big Nazi demonstrations were arranged against von Schuschnigg in Graz, Innsbruck, and Linz. The previous night the leaders in Graz and Vienna instructed their Nazi followers to abstain at the plebiscite. Yet Hitler had not yet made up his mind. The German army had been standing on the Austro-German frontier ever since January.

In the afternoon of March 11 came Hitler's first ultimatum: the plebiscite must be called off! Later in the evening, shortly before seven von Schuschnigg's voice was heard on the radio. He announced that the Germans demanded that he resign in favour of Seyss-Inquart, and that he was complying. He said also that the German army was to march in. Nevertheless, he instructed his generals not to offer resistance to the German troops because he wanted to avert the spilling of German blood.

By two o'clock on Saturday morning, March 12, Seyss-Inquart spoke on the radio as the newly appointed Chancellor of Austria. And in the afternoon hours on Saturday Herr Hitler arrived in Linz, coming from Munich via Braunau, his native place. On Sunday morning, March 13, Hitler visited the grave of his parents in Leonding and revived childhood reminiscences in both Linz and Leonding; in the evening hours the union of Germany and Austria was proclaimed.

Well over one hundred thousand troops marched into Austria on Saturday morning. Twenty thousand Berlin and Munich police, S.S. and S.A. were rushed to Austria and to Vienna, especially with a view to maintaining order during Herr Hitler's stay in his native country.

Hitler was deeply moved to be again in the country which he left when he was a young man of twenty-two. And Vienna, the eternal prostitute, received him with loud enthusiasm. Don't ask me how sincere this enthusiasm was! But it was loud. And the greater the opposition of the assembled crowd to Hitler before his coming, the louder were their shrieks, to compensate for previous lack of talent to gauge the trend of events. After all, in a crazy Mid-Europe everybody wants assurance, and it is safest to play ball with the most extreme because his revenge is the most fearful.

During Hitler's stay the crowd behaved comparatively well. Everybody flocked to the streets to see the Fuehrer — the Viennese were always eager to assemble to witness a good show, whether it were a military parade, an Emperor, or a funeral. Funerals! These were certainly favourite pastimes of the Viennese, and a *schoene Leich* (literally, nice corpse, but meaning an interesting funeral) always drew hundreds of thousands to the spacious Ringstrasse. As a funeral was not available, they flocked to the second best, and witnessed the arrival of the Fuehrer or the military parade that took place in front of the Imperial Palace... Though it was, after all, a funeral! the funeral of Austria...

As soon as Herr Hitler left Vienna, a chapter of terror opened. The Austrian S.A. and S.S., with an impatience which had been accumulating for five years, threw themselves into the streets and started to take revenge on Catholics, Legitimists, and especially on Jews. So quick was the German move into Austria that almost none of the prominent leaders could find time to escape. Chancellor von Schusch-

nigg was arrested by the Nazis and he now can contemplate the value of the 'German peace' of Berchtesgaden! Guido Zernatto, the Secretary-General of the Fatherland Front, got away in time — he was responsible for the arrangement of von Schuschnigg's plebiscite — but Baron Hornbostel, the Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Office, much hated by the Nazis because of his pro-Italian and pro-French views, was imprisoned. Colonel Adam, the propaganda chief of the Schuschnigg Government, and Edward Ludwig, the former Press Chief of Dollfuss, were imprisoned and in the first days of their captivity they were commandeered to wash automobiles. The wrath of the Nazis, of course, was chiefly directed against the Legitimists. The brother of 'Emperor' Otto, Archduke Felix, who studied in the Wiener Neustadt military academy, managed to escape in time with his sister, the Archduchess Adelhaide, but the leaders of the Legitimist movement, Frederick von Wiesner and Baron von Mirbach, were captured. Baron Karl von Werkmann, the former private secretary of Emperor Karl, was apparently killed by S.A. men.

Many prominent Jews were captured. Baron Louis Rothschild is imprisoned, and despite the intervention of his friend, the Duke of Windsor, he will hardly be released, because the Nazis will consider him an opportune victim to be thrown to the mob, and his coming trial will have to prove how the Jews have exploited Austria during the non-Nazi régime. That Rothschild lost his own fortune through the breakdown of the Creditanstalt in 1931 is not being mentioned nor the fact that he tried to recompense the State for its losses incurred by the collapse of the Creditanstalt by handing over two of his estates to the Government.

Professor Freud, the psychoanalyst, was for a time guarded in his own house by S.S., until he was allowed to go to England; while Professor Heinrich Neumann, the ear-doctor who treated the Duke of Windsor and Titulescu for years, was arrested on a charge of smuggling money out of the country.

There was a veritable havoc in the various cultural institutions. Bruno Walter, the Jewish Austrian-born conductor, and Egon Wellesz, the well-known modern composer, were fortunately out of Austria when the *bouleversement* occurred; they, however, can play no more rôles in Austria, and Walter's magnificent arrangement of *Tristan und Isolde* will no longer be audible in Salzburg... Lothar Wallerstein, who was responsible for the scenic management of most of the

opera performances in Vienna, cannot work any more because he is a Jew, and Arnold Rosé, the brilliant first violinist of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra was ruthlessly dismissed . . .

Jewish women were caught in the streets like cattle by cowboys and ordered to cleanse the streets from the propaganda mottoes of the Schuschnigg plebiscite days. In those hectic days one could see beautiful Jewesses, in expensive clothes, kneeling in the streets and rubbing and scrubbing the stone pavement while the mob jeered at them. Others were dragged to S.A. barracks and mercilessly flogged or ordered to scrub lavatories.

The Catholics, Legitimists, and Jews who committed suicide exceeded one thousand in number. Whether Major Fey committed suicide or was killed, nobody knows. Rumour steadily asserts that he and Neustaedter-Stuermer were murdered, because the Nazis wanted to be rid of two major witnesses when the trial of Planetta, the man who killed Dollfuss, was reopened. The Nazis apparently want to clear Planetta from the charge of having murdered Dollfuss, and wish to assert that Fey was responsible for the late Chancellor's death . . .

When all this happened, Austria was already the eighth *Gau* (province) of Greater Germany. Double-faced Janus could once more produce Vienna's other face, and the city of the *Lieber Augustin* outdid in cruelty her German rivals. The Austria which we all loved disappeared overnight. The individualistic, frivolous Vienna cannot exist under the heel of the Prussian drill sergeant. The Vienna of the *Heurige*, the careless and life-loving capital, with its cafés, with its Gallicized literature and Italo-Teuton individual music, will not be able to survive the strain of storm troopers and pedants imported from the Reich. And the Horst-Wessel song will take the place of the *Lieber Augustin*.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### AWAITING THE GERMAN ASSAULT

THE annexation of Austria, of course, was the fulfilment of one of the planks in the platform of the National Socialist Party in Germany, but, at the same time, everyone realized that it was the beginning of a thrust which should take Germany irresistibly toward old ideals; the capture of the economic resources of Southeastern Europe.

Berlin always considered it an anomaly that so powerful and great a nation as Germany should be so short of raw materials. While the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and France possess practically all the raw materials which such great empires require for the supply of their population and of their army, Germany lacks most of the important prime materials. She cannot raise sufficient food at home; she lacks iron ore, manganese, chromium, tungsten, vanadium, nickel, and helium; she has no oil whatsoever and no proper fats and lubricants; she is short of wool and cotton, as well as of other textiles, though she now obtained by the capture of Austria cellulose and considerable dairy produce.

German Imperialists before the war were considering how to procure these raw materials. Germany appeared in the colonial field somewhat too late, and her colonies in Africa could procure but very little which would have helped her out of her raw-material shortage. But ever since the rise to power of Emperor Wilhelm II, the eyes of the German Imperialists had turned toward the Southeast and the Near East, and the friendly policy which Wilhelm initiated toward blood-thirsty Abdul Hamid's Turkey indicated the trend of the German penetration policy of the future. Berlin to Baghdad was the ideal which every true German Imperialist cherished in his heart.

Defeat in the World War only complicated the problems of Germany. The loss of Alsace-Lorraine carried with it the loss of eighty per cent of the German home production of iron ore, and yet even

before the war Germany had had to import fifty per cent of this valuable raw material! Now she was almost completely dependent on foreign markets.

A weak and defeated Germany, however, could not even consider a push toward the Southeast to obtain the necessary raw materials. General von Seeckt's scheme for exploiting the resources of Russia in the interest of German production, with special regard to the requirements of the army, was interrupted by the anti-Bolshevik tendencies of the Nazi régime in Germany, though one must admit that the impossibility of driving any proper bargain with Soviet Russia also helped to cause the breakdown of this co-operation.

When the old Russo-German co-operation for raw-material supplies became impossible, Germany again turned toward the Near East and Southeastern Europe. In Chapter XXVII we saw that as long ago as three years, Hjalmar Schacht had prepared the route of penetration to the Balkans. But these bilateral clearing treaties were not considered dependable enough for Adolf Hitler's mighty Third Reich! It was necessary to make the dependence of those countries more firm and absolute.

Besides its national and *voelkische* (blood-relation nationalism) motives, Germany required Austria because of the iron ore contained in the Erzberg in Styria. While Hermann Goering in his four-year plan was obliged to open miserable Bavarian iron-ore mines, expensive to exploit and impossible to rent, the Erzberg is estimated to contain good iron ore to the amount of five hundred million tons. Moreover, we must take into consideration the fact that the deposits of German Lorraine contained only eight hundred million tons, and that while the minette ore of Lorraine was of inferior quality, containing only about twenty-five per cent of iron, the iron content of the siderite of Styria is well over forty per cent.

But Austria is only the beginning. Germany needs the extensive wheat and corn fields of Hungary; she is casting an eye on the copper and aluminum of Yugoslavia, the maize and oil of Rumania, the tobacco, cotton, and olives of Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey, and especially the iron ore, manganese, chromium, and nickel of Turkey.

For these reasons, the small nations of Central-Eastern Europe watched with great anxiety the development of events during the troubled summer of 1938. Immediately after the conquest of Austria, it appeared that Czechoslovakia would be the next victim. There

was a powerful army pushed into Austria which was threatening the rear of Czechoslovakia. It seemed that the primary purpose of such a huge army of occupation in Austria was to be a future army of conquest against Czechoslovakia. But the Germans immediately hurried to make assurances to Czechoslovakia that they had no offensive aims against her and that, as a gesture, the German army was kept fifteen kilometres distant from the Czechoslovak frontier. Previous to the occupation of Austria the German Minister in Prague, Herr Eisenlohr, twice got assurances from the Czech Government that the Prague War Office had not ordered a mobilization. These assurances were necessary because the Germans were anxious to avoid war, and a Czech mobilization might have led to a major war.

Yet, though there was no immediate attack on Czechoslovakia, the pressure exercised by Berlin on the various minorities increased. Not only the Sudeten Germans, but the Slovaks, the Hungarians, and the Poles were encouraged in their demands for autonomy.

The story of the fall of Czechoslovakia, however, we shall discuss in a later chapter. After the *Anschluss*, Hungary found herself in a dilemma. Her foreign policies during the last eighteen years have been based on her demand for revision of the peace treaties. Germany, of course, is the chief champion of revisionism, but Hungarian patriots have been asking themselves whether their country can receive revision through the good offices of Germany, and still remain independent, except in name.

Moreover, German money and propaganda have succeeded in fomenting such Nazi propaganda throughout the country that the pressing of a button in Berlin will probably be sufficient to 'nazify' Hungary. The absorption of Austria filled the Hungarian ruling classes with horror and fear and encouraged the Nazis to an extent which surpasses even the 'superiority complex' of the Graz Nazis before the conquest of Austria.

The Hungarian Nazi groupings are, however, divided, though there were signs of a willingness for further co-operation in the spring of 1938. There are extremists of the Right in the United Government Party of Premier Darányi, such as the members of Parliament, Andrew Mecsér, Béla Márton, and Count Domokos Festetics. The three chief Nazi parties are the Arrow-Cross Party of Count Alexander Festetics, so-called after their emblem which consists of four half-arrows placed together in a swastika form; the Party of the

National Will of Major Francis Szálasi, and the party of the National Front of Francis Rajniss. There is, in addition, the Turul students' association, led by the member of Parliament, Francis Vegvari, and smaller secessionist groups, such as the 'Lancers' of Kémery-Nagy, and the secessionist Arrow-Crossers of István Balogh from Debreczen. All these parties are for land reform, for the nationalization of heavy and war industries and of the mines, and for the radical solution of the Jewish question.

Though the more patriotic elements attempted to stem the tide of Naziism in Hungary, the movement is extremely strong, because it is the only activist movement in Hungary.

Moreover, through the absorption of Austria, Hungary's economic dependence on Germany has been increased. Three-quarters of Hungary's trade in 1937 went to Austria and Germany! To maintain this trade, Hungary will have to make many concessions to Germany, and Berlin is always more inclined to give a favourable trade treaty to a government which has one or two Nazis in it than to one which keeps its independent character...

Rumania's position was also far from enviable. Various reasons pressed Rumania during the last months to follow a policy of the extreme Right, though the efforts of the King were always directed toward the elimination of the party of the most extreme Right, namely, that of the Iron Guards. Relations with Russia became colder, and the friendship with Italy and Germany was measurably cultivated. But Rumania sees clearly Germany's aim to conquer the oil-fields of the Carpathian slopes. Therefore, she has recently shown a tendency to seek a new *rapprochement* with Russia.

For over a year, the Little Entente had been trying to draw Hungary into a non-aggression pact. Hungary had been holding off, partly to see what the revisionist countries would do, partly to obtain sweeping new guaranties for the Hungarian minorities included within the territories of the members of the Little Entente.

Her first question was answered when, it is believed, she was informed that in the event of German partition of Czechoslovakia, she would not be given the whole of Ruthenia; her second, when King Carol recently enacted his liberal minorities statute. Therefore she decided to come to terms with her neighbours. At the Bled Conference in August, Hungary and the Little Entente signed a non-aggression pact, in return for which the arms restrictions of the



Treaty of Trianon were abrogated, giving Hungary military equality. But simultaneously with the signing of this agreement, Horthy went to visit Hitler, who gave him the most cordial reception.

What are all these little countries to do, in the face of German pressure? Will they fall, one by one, conquered by the irresistible will and clever planning of Herr Hitler? Kamal Ataturk had already strengthened Greco-Turkish relations, which now amount to an alliance; if the Balkan *entente* could be fortified, this might be an efficient barrier to German ambition in the Near East.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### CZECHOSLOVAKIA REDUCED

KING EDWARD VII of England, Queen Mariora of Yugoslavia, and many others who suffered from a superfluity of fatness, used to visit Marienbad every year in order to get rid of additional weight. Czechoslovakia did not have to go to Marienbad to reduce: the possession of this famous spa was sufficient to cause her reduction...

For those of us who lived through the painful chapter which corresponded with the shrinking of Czechoslovakia, once fifteen millions strong, it is still inconceivable how France could sacrifice her only well-armed, well-prepared ally. Many students of politics, however, believe that, when France decided to construct the Maginot line, she simultaneously gave up the idea of coming to the help of any of her allies.

Now in retrospect, September and October, 1938, were the vindication of two great Central European figures, King Alexander I of Yugoslavia and Marshal Pilsudski of Poland. These two men were realists. When, in January, 1933, Herr Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of the German Reich, the leader of each of these Slav countries came to the conclusion (without consulting the other) that either a preventive war would have to be waged on Germany, or else his country would have no other choice than to make up its feud with Germany and conclude some agreement or other with her.

These two were perfectly right, and the fatal September days of the unholy year 1938 clearly proved it. For another great figure of post-war Europe, Doctor Eduard Benes, these fatal days brought a political end. His fault was one common to almost all Americans and Englishmen: he believed in 'scraps of paper,' in honour, in decency, in friendship, and in collective security — today all ante-diluvian notions! He and his country had to pay dearly for their simpleton ways — ways which, incidentally, every American would have adopted in his place...

The causes which hastened the reduction of Czechoslovakia to a triune Czech-Moravian-Slovak-Carpatho-Ukrainian small Slav state were of international nature. There was, first, the determination of Herr Adolf Hitler to enlarge Germany by the three and a half million Germans living in Sudetia (the Sudeten parts of Czechoslovakia); second, Hitler's resolve to break the Franco-Czechoslovak-Soviet-Russian military alliance system; third, the sympathy of an influential group of British aristocrats and businessmen with this endeavour of Germany to eliminate Russia from European politics; fourth, the belief of this same group of Britishers that no English blood must be spilled for obscure Central and Southeastern European countries which in any case were always the 'hunting ground' of German rulers; and, fifth, that as soon as France obtained the long-wished security from Great Britain on the occasion of the English Royal visit to Paris in July, 1938, she no longer had any intense interest in the fate of her allies.

In retrospect, the events of the Czechoslovak final chapter, like those of the Austrian, can be traced to the visit of Lord Halifax to Berchtesgaden when Herr Hitler obtained the impression, rightly or wrongly, that Great Britain would not intervene if Germany attempted to realize her 'legitimate' aspirations in Central Europe, provided that she arranged it peacefully, without provoking a war.

One of the questions, which only posterity will be able to answer, is: Why did Hitler wait so long to settle the Czechoslovak question, which was a dangerous thorn in the way of his Southeastern European ambitions? It is known that already in the fall of 1937 the ambitious general of Nazi sympathies, von Reichenau, who then was commander of the Munich army corps, entertained ambitions for the conquest of Czechoslovakia. In those days, an agreement existed between the German and Austrian general staffs, according to which the Austrian army would not offer armed resistance if Germany were to attempt to march across Austrian territory to outflank the Czechoslovak fortifications which then were not yet completed on the Moravian-Austrian and Slovakian-Austrian frontiers. It appears that German rearmament in November, 1937, had not progressed sufficiently to give assurance to Germany in case France or Russia should have come to the help of Czechoslovakia.

When Reichenau's plan could not be carried through, Austria was 'tackled,' and, as we know, very successfully. But in March, 1938,

again something occurred which will remain a mystery until historical research completely clears it up: First, Germany did not follow up her Austrian conquest by attacking the still insufficiently fortified Austro-Czech frontier, and, second, Czechoslovakia did not mobilize, though such a mobilization would probably have been sufficient to prevent an armed occupation of Austria. But as Czechoslovakia did not mobilize, why did Hitler not follow up his attack on Austria by turning the Czechoslovak Maginot line? The international situation was favourable: England had just passed through a serious crisis (Eden's resignation occurred less than one month before the *Anschluss*) and France had not even a Premier in those fatal days when German troops invaded Austria. It seems that the occupation of Austria was made possible by collecting large contingents of troops at the expense of depleting the defences of Bavaria, and if Germany had attacked Czechoslovakia, the Czech armed forces in Moravia and Bohemia could have invaded Bavaria.

In any case, Czechoslovakia avoided her apparently inevitable fate in November, 1937, and in March, 1938. Germany then tried her luck a third time: in May, 1938. Though Herr Hitler later denied that Germany had any intention on Czechoslovakia in those days, and declared that there was no German mobilization, the movement of troops had been admitted by von Ribbentrop previously, and it was the British secret service which supplied the facts on the basis of which Czechoslovakia had ordered the mobilization on May 21, 1938. Just because it looked as if Germany intended to invade Czechoslovakia by armed forces, Great Britain and France declared that they would stand by should Czechoslovakia be invaded by German troops.

The German Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, thought even in May that the Franco-British stand on behalf of Czechoslovakia was a bluff. It seems that he was right.

In the meantime, ever since the beginning of 1938 the German propaganda apparatus had been working up to a high pitch the internal troubles in the Sudeten German districts. It seems that in those days German propaganda was satisfied with the hope of gaining the Sudeten lands by two stages: first, by attaining autonomy for the Germans in Czechoslovakia, and, second, by exploiting this autonomy later in a way which then would lead to the separation of the German districts from Bohemia. The most important event

in this direction was the yearly conference of the Sudeten German Party of Herr Henlein in Karlsbad when on April 24, 1938, Herr Conrad Henlein presented his demands summarized in eight points, later known as the 'eight Karlsbad demands' which amounted to the establishment of a complete *voelkische* (national-racial) autonomy in Sudetia.

Thanks to German interference the situation in the Sudeten German parts became intolerable during the early summer of 1938. While German propaganda alarmed the world about Czech brutality against the 'poor' Sudeten Germans, in reality the followers of Henlein by that time had established a reign of terror in the district, the victims of which were those who refused to join the party.

The days of the May mobilization had given Prague a lever to establish somewhat more firmly its rule in the Sudeten German area where up to then the Czech policeman was just an exhibit who did not dare to intervene if Sudeten Germans attacked and insulted non-Henleinist Germans, Socialists, or Jews. But when Prague's rule became slightly firmer, the German propaganda cried out bitterly against the 'brutality of Czechoslovak *soldateska*.' *Soldateska*, by the way, is a word coined by the pre-war democrats in Germany against the overbearing attitude of Prussian officers. Now it was successfully employed to reveal to the world the high-handedness of Czech military methods — highly exaggerated, as one expects of the propaganda of Herr Goebbels.

Then, under foreign influence, negotiations started between the Prague Government and the Sudeten German leaders. The Prague rulers made the mistake of presenting these negotiations in a favourable light. But on July 12, 1938, I had an interview with H. K. Frank, the deputy-Fuehrer of the Sudeten Germans, who then was conducting the negotiations, and who warned me of undue optimism. 'Nothing has happened yet, and we cannot speak even of negotiations — we have had only formal contact with the representatives of the Prague Government.'

Those who followed the negotiations carefully realized that, as far as the Sudeten Germans were concerned, the negotiations were 'eye-wash.' They were trying to fill in the time until 'the day.'

Though Germany was very bitter about the Franco-British stand in May, new negotiations had clandestinely started, and a recent revelation of the well-informed London correspondent of the

*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* has clearly shown that back in May Premier Neville Chamberlain realized that Czechoslovakia would have to sacrifice her minorities.

Then came the important visit of the British Royal couple to Paris on July 28, 1938. Two days prior to this visit the aide-de-camp of Herr Hitler, Major Wiedemann, flew to London, and important negotiations took place in the English capital. Today one can assume with definite safety that during this visit of Wiedemann the fate of Czechoslovakia was sealed. France two days later obtained the long-wished British guaranty and it was not difficult to persuade Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister, to drop the idea of French help for Czechoslovakia in case she were attacked by Germany.

Germany, however, needed more time. And thus, with British-German consent, Lord Runciman was sent to Prague to take up the thread of the negotiations between Prague and the Sudetens. The writer of these lines is convinced that Lord Runciman was *bona fide*, and he really thought himself an honest jobber in a nasty mess. But his *entourage* knew that Lord Runciman's mission was to avert war, if possible, and to prolong *pourparlers* until a time when Czechoslovakia was 'softened' sufficiently by foreign pressure to yield to Germany's demands for a separation!

Runciman's mediation produced four plans: the fourth plan looked like a decent and far-reaching solution. But those who knew the German appetite realized that all this was not sufficient for Herr Hitler, who wanted 'everything.' And even in the Sudeten German Party the game was played well: it seemed that there was a group, under the negotiators Rosche, Sebekovsky, and Kundt, who acted as if they were inclined for moderation, whereas another section, under the leadership of H. K. Frank, the real leader of the Sudeten German movement (Conrad Henlein was only the original organizer of the party, but Frank was the heart and soul of the movement), acted as 'fire-eaters.'

As the days of the Nuremberg Party Congress of the German National Socialists approached, everybody knew that the final decision of Herr Hitler about Czechoslovakia was now due. And the very first days of the Party Congress brought the complications. The German leaders knew quite well, despite the speech of Sir John Simon on August 27, 1938, that Great Britain was not going to fight for Czechoslovakia's present frontiers. And with this certainty, they determined to bring about the issue.

Certainly the German army did not want to be involved in a war, at least not in a European war. But the firebrands, such as von Ribbentrop, Himmler, and Goebbels, were pressing for the cutting of the Gordian knot. Hitler, with his speech still to make, was hesitant as to the final methods to be chosen. Henlein was already in Nuremberg, and in the absence of the local Fuehrer his deputy, H. K. Frank, succeeded in putting through his extremist policy at home in the Sudeten lands. Czech-German relations in the Sudeten parts took warlike forms, and the local leaders now insisted on the complete fulfilment of the April 24, 1938 demands of the Karlsbad program. Full autonomy and nothing less!

In the meantime, more and more German troops, now on manoeuvres in Germany, were shifted toward the Czechoslovak frontiers. The Prague Government clandestinely answered it by shifting more troops to the Sudeten areas, and by tacitly calling up further classes of reserves. Undoubtedly acting under the influence of Himmler and Goebbels, H. K. Frank now sent his famous ultimatum telegram to the Prague Government on September 8, demanding of the rulers in Prague, first, the withdrawal of the state police from the Sudeten area and handing over the maintenance of order to the local *Ordnung* — auxiliary police, formed of the F.S., the semi-military organization of the Henlein Party; second, the reduction of the gendarmerie to the normal figure; and third, the withdrawal of the military into the usual army barracks and places. This ultimatum was sent by Frank, in the name of the executive of the Henlein Party who withdrew in the meantime to Karlsbad and, during the same night, to Asch, the home town of Conrad Henlein. (Asch is a salient which in those days protruded deep into German territory, and the Czech authorities had no means of defending it or of carrying out punitive expeditions there.)

The ultimatum of the Henleinists was not complied with, and the situation grew worse as far as international politics were concerned; but at the same time the Czech Government succeeded in reasserting its authority completely all over the Sudeten German territory. The swastika flags disappeared, the swastika armlets of the F.S. were no more to be seen.

On September 12, 1938, Hitler delivered his aggressive, almost vituperative, speech against Czechoslovakia. France was already mobilizing, and English naval reserves were called up. Russia,

though silent, showed movements which indicated her interest in the affair. Then, when it looked as if war were inevitable, suddenly Mr. Neville Chamberlain flew to Berchtesgaden on September 15. This resulted in an ultimatum, sent through the medium of Mr. Chamberlain to Czechoslovakia, demanding the cession of the Sudeten German territories to Germany. Meantime it was arranged that Chamberlain should bring back the answer to Hitler, this time meeting him halfway — in Godesberg on the Rhine on September 22.

At the same time tremendous pressure was put on Doctor Benes to yield. The French and British Ministers (M. Delacroix and Mr. Basil Newton) repeatedly made representations even during the nights, and finally, in rude language, forced Benes and the Czechs to accept the so-called Franco-British plan.

There were, of course, two groups fighting with each other in Czechoslovakia: the die-hards who wanted to go to the extremes with military preparations, being convinced that Hitler would have funk'd a war, and the 'soft-pedallars' who came mostly either from the wealthy classes or from the agrarian groups, especially the wing of the Agrarian Party under the leadership of Pan Beran, who counselled acceptance of the Franco-British plan, because they loathed the idea of fighting on the side of Soviet Russia against Germany.

It was only on the evening of September 20 that the Czech public learned, and even then only insufficiently, about the deal effected at their expense. An uproar of indignation followed, and tens of thousands of people marched through the streets of Prague, Brno, Pilsen, and Bratislava, protesting against the deal, and booing France and England. On that night I went with my colleague John Whitaker and with H. R. Knickerbocker to a fashionable restaurant; they refused to serve us, because we spoke — English! As a result of this uproar the Hodza Government resigned on September 22, and on that same day, General Jan Syrový, the one-eyed chief of the General Staff, became Prime Minister.

In the meantime Godesberg came, at which Hitler gave to Chamberlain a new ultimatum which went far beyond the Berchtesgaden demands. Now it was asked that all territories populated by Germans, or where the German minority was about fifty per cent or above, should be evacuated by October 1, while in the other areas populated by Germans and Czechs a military occupation should follow, but a plebiscite should decide the ultimate fate of the population — a plebiscite to be held by November 25.



Another crisis — further complications. While the Godesberg conference was still on, the Germans took further menacing military moves, and at British counsel the Czech Government decided to mobilize.

At 10.23 P.M. on September 23 loudspeakers mounted in the streets of Prague announced the mobilization. I never saw such efficiency, such discipline in my life! I listened to the broadcast in my room; rushing downstairs immediately afterward, I found all the porters, telephone operators, and waiters of military age already leaving the hotel. The trolley cars stopped in the streets because the drivers and conductors rushed to the places assigned them, the taxis were all requisitioned. At midnight there was a complete blackout, and the American correspondents, John Whitaker, H. R. Knickerbocker, Vincent Sheean, Maurice Hindus, Raymond Swing, who assembled in our rooms in the Hotel Ambassador, expected any minute the coming of Goering's one thousand machines which he had promised to send over Prague should war break out between the two countries. Not much would have been left of the Vaclavske Namesti (the main street of Prague where we lived) or of us, the correspondents, I am sure!

But Goering did not come. Chamberlain next day flew back to London, and on the Monday following Godesberg, Hitler delivered another nasty speech in the Sportpalast in Berlin. In the meantime Polish and Hungarian statesmen were rushing to Berchtesgaden and Berlin to discuss the further dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. The situation grew worse, and the French increased their mobilization, the British mobilized the Fleet. But the German poker-players knew better — those two countries were not in the mood to make war for Czechoslovakia! The attitude of Russia remained mysterious, and even if Litvinoff declared in Geneva that Russia was ready to fulfil her obligations if France was ready to do so, the general feeling, rightly or wrongly, in Czechoslovakia and abroad, was that Stalin feared a war because the armed forces of the Soviet Russian Republics might have turned against him . . .

What if Czechoslovakia had fought? Most of my friends in Prague believed that this was the right thing to do; because they were going down in any case — why, then, not die in honour? But the pressure of the agrarians on the one side and the humanitarian education of the leaders on the other spoke against this 'suicide' proposition.

They calculated that a four weeks' war with Germany would have cost Czechoslovakia one and a half million casualties. The Czechs were ready to die for their country. I never have seen such grim determination as there was on the faces of the Czechs ever since the beginning of the acute part of the crisis. They were businesslike and determined. If the leaders had been Serbs, then I believe Czechoslovakia would have fought. And who knows? Look at Spain! The Czech Maginot line was certainly not marmalade!

When, however, the war clouds looked blackest, on September 28, 1938, Chamberlain sent a message to Mussolini, and two days later at the four-Power conference in Munich the final fate of Czechoslovakia was sealed. Peace was saved, but at what a price!

On October 1, German troops, indeed, could enter the Sudeten land, and by October 4 the first and second zones were completely occupied by German troops. On that day Herr Hitler paid a visit to Karlsbad.

On October 5, a relative of Doctor Hodza informed me at lunch time that the worst had come: under German pressure, in order to save the ramshackle remains of his country, Doctor Eduard Benes, the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, offered his resignation. *Consummatum est!*

The man who, together with Masaryk, was the founder of the republic of Czechoslovakia, was a sick and broken person by that date. The continuous mental third-degree treatment of Germany, and the betrayal of his allies, caused the complete collapse of the nerves of this able statesman. And on October 22 he had to sneak out from the country which he had founded, like a dog which had been whipped...

History will size up the merits and the faults of Doctor Benes, but even now one can give a preliminary judgment. He was more a realist than his idealist master, T. G. Masaryk, but probably because he had grown up in the intriguing atmosphere of Geneva he overshot the mark repeatedly in past years.

Neither Masaryk nor Benes can be blamed for the frontiers of Czechoslovakia, as they were until October 1, 1938. The two statesmen wanted a Czechoslovak grouping, without any German and Magyar additions. Carpatho-Russia they obtained only when Hungary went Bolshevik in 1919, and by that time Czechoslovakia desired a common frontier with her ally, Rumania. But it was the

French General Staff which forced on Czechoslovakia the Sudeten German parts because only the mountains offered sufficient defence against Germany. The same was true of the Magyar additions which were needed to get the Danube as a frontier...

Benes concluded the Soviet Russian alliance only when he was unable to obtain the British guaranty which England was later willing to offer in Godesberg and Munich. But his great mistake was in not speeding up the concessions to the Germans. If in 1926 the Germans had obtained far-reaching concessions, Czechoslovakia's fate might have developed differently.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### A GERMAN GOES TO THE BALKANS

THE occupation of the Sudeten German parts of Czechoslovakia and the Polish parts of Teschen was completed by October 10, thus finishing the 'shearing' of the old historical provinces of Bohemia and Moravia. Out of the total population of 15,000,000 about 3,500,000 went to Germany and about 200,000 to Poland. About 800,000 Czechs were handed over to Germany and 100,000 to Poland, while 400,000 Germans remained within Czechoslovakia, at Iglau and Bruenn. With this transfer of territories Czechoslovakia lost many of her raw-material and industrial resources. She suffered serious blows in the loss of all brown coal (lignite) at Bruex and Dux, and more than fifty per cent of the hard coal at Karvin, Dombrau, and Teschen (this latter to Poland). The important state-owned radium mine at Joachimsthal, from the raw masses of which Madame Curie discovered radium, has gone to Germany. Virtually the whole china and two-thirds of the glass industry around Karlsbad and Gablonz has gone to Germany. Half of the textile industry, especially around Reichenberg, Rumburg, and Warnsdorf was lost to the Reich. One-third of the chemical industry, including the important works at Aussig, also passed into German hands.

On the other hand, Czechoslovakia retained the important boot and shoe works of Bata at Zlin, the armament and engineering works of Skoda in Pilsen and the big machine-gun works at Bruenn.

The third slice of Czechoslovakia, claimed by Hungary, was given to her as a result of the agreement signed by Ciano and von Ribbentrop in Vienna on November 2. It accorded her nearly all the territory she had demanded — about 4800 square miles and 1,060,000 inhabitants. The occupation began November 5 and ended November 10.

Through these changes Czechoslovakia will be more an agricultural than an industrial country which will have telling effects on

her politics. Already the present Syrový régime has turned more conservative and is coveting German friendship.

And here is the *clou* of the whole situation. Undoubtedly Herr Hitler always wanted to carry out article Number 1 of the National Socialist platform program, namely, the union of all Germans in the Greater-German Reich. But Czechoslovakia was not such an obstacle in this as in other aspects. Only last year an important Czech official told me: 'If we could say "Herr Hitler, we are willing to give up the Russian alliance and make friendship with you," then Herr Hitler would have asked, "Do you want Henlein hanged or quartered?"'

This, to a great extent, was true. Czechoslovakia, with her French and Russian alliances, was in the way of Germany's ambitions of spreading her power to the southeast. Even if Germany had succeeded in gaining, peacefully or otherwise, Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Rumania, this would have been of little avail: on Germany's route to Istanbul Czechoslovakia would have remained a serious menace on Germany's flank of expansion. It was for this reason that the Czechoslovak 'blister had to be pricked.'

Poor Benes! It was less than two years ago that Germany offered a treaty to Czechoslovakia which would have assured her further existence for a number of years to come! He declined the offer because the French General Staff energetically advised him to reject it!

Germany was determined to expand to the southeast. As we saw in a previous chapter, after the World War Germany, and especially the German army leaders, under the influence of General Seeckt, hoped to obtain the necessary raw materials for Germany's industrial and rearmament reconstruction from Soviet Russia. But the National Socialists were enemies of this idea, and when Herr Hitler came to power, this co-operation had to cease. It was in June, 1935, that Doctor Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht, President of the Reichsbank and then still Minister of Economics, made a trip to Budapest, Belgrade, Sofia, Ankara, and Athens to assure better economic co-operation between Germany and Southeastern Europe and to induce the Balkan countries to liquidate their frozen assets at the Berlin Reichsbank by purchasing greater quantities of goods in Germany. The trade between Germany and the Southeastern European countries has been increasing by leaps and bounds ever since that journey of President Doctor Schacht.

Until the spring of 1938, however, many countries, like Turkey and Rumania, were somewhat anxious about this continuously rising influence of German trade in their countries. 'The flag follows the trade,' says the old saying, and these countries were all suspicious: 'Is this German "peaceful" penetration not going to mean ultimately German domination?'

However, since the fall of Austria and Czechoslovakia, not much hope has been left for them. If Germany became their best customer, Italy was playing an increasingly smaller rôle in their trade, and their second-best customers, such as Austria and Czechoslovakia, now had fallen entirely within the German orbit.

It was under these circumstances that another German ventured into the Balkans. In 1934, Roehm and Goering visited Yugoslavia and other Balkan countries to exploit in Germany's favour the economic plight of those countries; in June, 1935, Schacht visited these countries to increase the trade between Germany and the Balkans, and in October, 1938, Doctor Walter Funk, Reichs-Minister for Economics, visited Belgrade, Ankara, and Sofia with the avowed purpose of putting on the finishing touch: namely, to reorganize Southeastern European trade with Germany within the scopes and limits of the German autarchy system — to create a *Mittleuropa Grosswirtschaftsraum* — a big economic co-operation of Central and Southeastern Europe under German hegemony. Doctor Naumann's *Mittleuropa* scheme *redivivus*! Long live the Berlin-Baghdad line!

When Doctor Schacht heard about the *Anschluss* of Austria, he exclaimed, 'Hurrah! the road of the Niebelungen is now open to us.' The Niebelungen saga heroes used to follow the trend from the Rhine down into the Danube Valley . . . And now the Danubian trend was once more assured through the conquest of Vienna.

Doctor Funk declared in Sofia that his journey was not for the purpose of bringing any Balkan country into any kind of dependency upon Germany. There existed, of course, a natural economic territory from the North Sea to the Black Sea, said Funk, but within this huge territory there was enough place for many national economics. Germany intended to exploit hitherto undeveloped resources of these countries, said Funk.

And, indeed, the unexploited resources of Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Turkey are enormous! Consequently, if Germany will carry out

the development of these resources, then her entire problem of raw-material supply will be solved forever!

In Yugoslavia the agreement between Doctor Funk and the Yugoslav Premier, Doctor Stoyadinovitch, amounted to Germany's acceptance of taking over half of Yugoslavia's yearly production at a guaranteed high price. Doctor Stoyadinovitch, unlike his Turkish colleague, refused to accept an economic credit from Germany, but ultimately this does not change very much the coming dependency of Yugoslavia on Germany. Yugoslavia, of course, is a wealthy country. She is the third largest producer of magnesite in Europe, the fourth of bauxite (aluminum ore), and produces more copper ore than any other country in Europe. In addition she has iron, chromium, lead, zinc, as well as a varied choice of agrarian products.

Five years ago Italy was Yugoslavia's best customer, purchasing about 25 per cent of her total exports. Since the conquest of Abyssinia this trade has declined, and in August, 1938, Italian trade with Yugoslavia was only 5 per cent! At the same time German purchases amounted to 59 per cent of Yugoslavia's total exports this August, compared with 21.5 per cent last year! German participation in Yugoslav capital investments amounted to just over one million dollars in 1934. Through natural increase, plus the Austrian and Sudeten German capital participation, Greater Germany's capital investments in Yugoslavia amount to \$16,400,000 against \$23,000,000 of French and \$12,000,000 of English capital. And Germany now sought to increase this participation to the height of France's!

But how to do without foreign exchange? The Germans succeeded in inducing the Yugoslav Government to guarantee a surplus of German exports over imports. This surplus was to be subjected to scrutinized control. The exports of consumers' goods from Germany were not to increase (such as optical glasses, apparatus, etc.), but factory and industrial installations, with the ratio of the Reichsmark to the dinar fixed and controlled.

This new capital participation through export surplus should be regulated, first, according to national planning in Yugoslavia, and, second, in accordance with the German four-year plan.

In Turkey Doctor Funk succeeded in placing a German commercial credit of \$60,000,000 in Ankara. This will be used for construction of industrial enterprises, railroads, and other engineering undertakings. Turkish-German trade increased enormously in 1938, partly

through the *Anschluss*, and German exports to Turkey rose in the first half of the year to \$30,000,000, from \$14,400,000 in the same period of 1937; Turkish imports from Germany, however, dropped to \$20,000,000 against \$28,700,000 in 1937. The \$60,000,000 loan, however, should help the increase of these imports from Germany.

Bulgaria was for some time the most dependent on German trade, and now that Austria and Czechoslovakia, both good customers of Bulgaria, are gone, she will have to take three-quarters of her supplies from Greater Germany.

Greece received in 1937 a \$60,000,000 commercial loan from Germany, mostly for the purposes of rearmament. Hungarian trade has also become more dependent on Germany since the *Anschluss*, and Rumania in vain tries to play off England against German influence. Germany needs the oil supplies of Rumania, and she is determined to have them — one way or another. I hear that Funk may visit Rumania before long.

Poland received a \$24,000,000 commercial loan and her trade with Germany in 1938 is expected to be double that of 1937.

This expansion is all well and good, but it has one weakness: 'There are plenty of plans, but no money.'

For this reason it is no wonder that Germany at the end of 1938 tried to lure Switzerland, a country strong in capital, to co-operate with her in Central and Southeastern Europe. Switzerland showed very little inclination to follow this invitation.

Capitalistically thinking countries believe that Germany, just because of her dearth of money, will not be able to carry through this penetration into Southeastern Europe. It is certain that Germany would prefer that England or the United States should finance her Southeastern European experiment. Undoubtedly an influential wing of the London City was willing to undertake such investments, provided they were authorized to act in such a way by the competent authorities. But probably recent events have opened the eyes of English statesmen and they must realize that the capital investment in Germany's Balkan expansion would be financing their own downfall, and the breakup of the Empire.

On the other hand, it would be erroneous to believe that if Switzerland, the United States, England, and France refuse to give credits to Germany, then German expansion in Southeastern Europe is doomed to failure.



Until the conquest of Czechoslovakia this was, indeed, the situation. But now Germany's way is open right up to Baghdad, and she will be able to acquire all the raw materials which she requires for her industrial production and complete and perfect rearmament. She will give industrial produce for agricultural goods and minerals. But already the Yugoslav experience shows that financing can occur with surplus exports, and only those who do not want to see will repeat: 'She cannot do it! She cannot do it!' Germany has already solved greater problems than that!

Thus, while Germany would welcome a participation by foreign capital in her *Drang nach Osten*, it would be shortsighted to believe that she will not be able to solve this problem at however great expense and sacrifices. In her new economic system, *surplus production*, attained by the ten, twelve, and fourteen hours' work of her labouring class, will replace the *surplus capital*, used hitherto by the capitalist Powers.

And she is so confident of achieving this aim that Istanbul and Ankara are no longer sufficient as ultimate aim of this trend. Last March 25, a fast airmail line was opened between Berlin and Baghdad which covers the twenty-five hundred miles in twenty-four hours. Hitler congratulated the King of Iraq on the occasion of his birthday; he sent a telegram of greeting to the Shah of Iran on the occasion of the Haufuz festivities. It is now announced that Doctor Walter Funk will continue his journey to Iran and Afghanistan. It seems that even the Berlin-Baghdad dream is not sufficiently daring for Hitler and his friends. Their present ambitions go beyond Baghdad!

THE END

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